Class BV811
Book .M47
1812

THE

Mode and Subjects of Baptism

EXAMINED,

IN

SEVEN SERMONS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A MINIATURE HISTORY OF THE BAPTISTS.

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Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth? NICODEMUS. JOHN vii. 51.

Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. JESUS CHRIST.

TENTH EDITION.

BOSTON:
Printed and sold by MANNING & LORING, No. 2, Cornhill.

Sept. 1812.

BV 811
M47
1818

TO THE READER.

Fellow Traveller to Eternity,

YOU and I are the offspring of God. The period of our return to him swiftly approaches. Then the motive I have had in writing, and which you shall have had in reading, will both be known. How, and how far the following pages will affect my present and future life, is with the LORD. How far they shall affect thine, is also with HIM. One thing is certain: the truth of what I have written will be soon known. You are willing to know it now, provided you know the value of the gospel, and possess an heart humbled by its doctrines.

Reader, be not offended at what I have written, till you be sure it is false. Do thyself no harm. Read, consider, compare every part, and the whole, with divine truth, in such a manner and spirit, as shall yield thee a pleasing reflection in the world to come.

If the subject, as here presented, be true, it is a serious truth. If an error, it is a serious one. It nearly concerns the kingdom of IMMANUEL, to whose pleasure and mercy the whole is cheerfully resigned,

By, Reader,
Thy Servant,
For Jesus' sake,
THE AUTHOR

SEDGWICK,
Dec. 27, 1804.

The Mode and Subjects of Baptism.

SERMON I.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

IT hath pleased the Father of Mercies to bestow on fallen man a revelation from heaven. In it is contained the scheme of grace, which brings life and immortality to light. It shows the way by which to escape the wrath to come, and to find the favour of God. All scripture is given by his inspiration, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Till the human heart be humbled, in measure, man feels not his need of divine teaching; nor will he make the scriptures the man of his counsel. But my brethren, and people, it is doubtless the case that many of you possess a willingness to have your principles and practice squared by the word and testimony of Jesus Christ. My text contains some of the last words of our great High-Priest. It is the general orders which he gave his first apostles, and left for the instruction, practice and comfort of all their successors, to the end of the world. In the verse which precedes my text, Christ informs us that all power in heaven and in earth is given unto him. His words, therefore, are clothed with authority. May we hear, and fear, and be obedient. Where the word of a king is, there is power; and who may say unto the King of Zion, What dost thou?

So far as we be Christians, all that is necessary to enforce obedience is, to know what Christ would have us to do. Perhaps not a passage in all the oracles of truth contains more extensive

inſtruction than do the words of my text. The commands are exceedingly broad; the Baptiſmal Inſtitution comprehends all obedient diſciples; and the comforting promiſe is durable as the world.

In my text, Chriſt Jeſus, the Head of the church and Lord of all, conſtituted his preſent and ſucceeding diſciples to be apoſtles unto all nations. It contains their commiſſion, and general and particular orders. In it they are directed——

I. To go and diſciple all nations.

II. To baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.

III. He directs theſe newly conſtituted apoſtles, and all their ſucceſſors, to teach their baptized diſciples to obſerve all things whatſoever he had given in commandment.

Laſtly. For their encouragement and comfort, he adds, And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

I ſuppoſe it will be expedient, and with me it is an indiſpenſable duty, that I lay each of theſe propoſitions as fairly and as fully before you as I can. But I ſhall not obſerve the order in which they lie in my text, which is as I have juſt ſtated them. For I have many things to ſay unto you, in agreement with my text, but fear that you are not, all of you, able to bear them now. We ſhall therefore begin with the

II. Which contains Chriſt's command to baptize, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, thoſe who ſhall be diſcipled of all nations.

Nor do I purpoſe to call your attention, at this time, to the whole which is implied in this propoſition. But what I purpoſe is, to define a few words which appertain to the ordinance, and then collect the ſcripture account of baptiſm, with ſome other texts, which may throw light upon the ſubject. Afterwards, in diſcourſes which may follow, I may produce evidence, that my definition of baptiſm is accurate and juſt; and ſhow how the apoſtles and primitive Chriſtians underſtood this matter, and how they practiſed. When this is done, it will be eaſily ſeen, what is the outward and viſible part of baptiſm; and then the purport, end and deſign of the inſtitution may call for ſome attention.

Before I proceed to open, illuſtrate and confirm theſe particulars, I have ſeveral things to ſay unto you. For I wiſh you to attend to the ſubject without partiality and without hypocriſy. I pray God to remove darkneſs and all prejudice from

your minds, that you may, indeed, come to the law and to the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt in this matter.

You will conſider me as under the ſtrongeſt worldly inducements to continue to believe and practiſe as I have heretofore done; for ſhould I, after mature conſideration, be conſtrained to believe and practiſe differently, you will be releaſed from all legal obligations to afford me any farther ſupport; my relations will, the moſt of them, probably be greatly ſhocked and diſpleaſed, at the report; many, whom I highly value as Chriſtians, and numbers of them zealous preachers of the goſpel, will, it may be, conſider me as loſt, and worſe than loſt, to the church, and world: and, beſides this, multitudes will, no doubt, ſay all manner of evil againſt me. All this being true, with a thouſand other connected ſmaller evils, and nothing of a worldly nature in proſpect, ſave what is contained in the promiſe of Jeſus Chriſt, you cannot but conclude that I ſhall proceed no farther in this matter than I am obliged to, in following the Lamb of God whitherſoever he goeth.

Having ſaid thus much with reſpect to myſelf, I will ſtill add, that, ſhould a change in my belief and practice, reſpecting the ſubject on hand, bring me to a more full belief and practice of the truth, I ſhall, on the whole, be a gainer. But, ſhould a change take place, and I be called to ſuſtain all the evils which I may calculate upon, and after all be plunged myſelf into a hurtful and bewildering error, ſurely all the meek and lowly in heart would rather commiſerate than revile me.

Another thing I would mention to you, ſo that the ſubject may, if it poſſibly can, meet your minds without prejudice. You ought not to fix your judgments, nor found your belief, upon the arguments or confeſſions of great and good men, any farther than ſuch arguments and confeſſions are conformed with the ſcriptures of truth. Should we hearken to what the greateſt and beſt of men have confeſſed and affirmed of the ſubject which we are about to conſider, and have our belief and practice correſponding with what they have written, the matter would, moſt evidently, go againſt what we have, in time paſt, both believed and practiſed. For they have very generally, or very many of them, if not all of them, confeſſed, or affirmed, however their practice may have been, that immerſion was the mode practiſed by the apoſtles and primitive church. This I purpoſe to prove to you in its proper place.

What I have more to add, before I proceed to the main buſineſs, is, to ſtate a few plain truths.

1. Baptism is a positive institution, about which we can know nothing, as to its being a Christian ordinance, but from what Christ, and those inspired by his Spirit, have taught us.

2. All which we are required to believe and practise, with respect to the Christian ordinance of baptism, is declared to us by Jesus Christ and his forerunner and apostles.

3. When Jesus Christ first instituted the ordinance of baptism, he, no doubt, delivered his mind so clearly and fully upon the subject, that his immediate disciples and apostles understood and practised as he would have them.

4. Every thing which hath, by the precepts and commandments of men, been added since, is distinct from the ordinance, and makes no part of it.

5. No man, or body of men, have any more authority to add to this ordinance, or to diminish from it, than they have to institute a new one and call it Christ's.

6. Whenever, and wherever, this ordinance is so changed, as to lose the intent of the Institutor, then and there the ordinance is lost, and becomes no Christian ordinance at all.

Having laid these preparatory observations, remarks and plain truths before you, we proceed to consider the subject now on hand, which is—

Christ's command to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, those who shall be discipled of all nations.

What is proposed for the present discourse is—

1. To define a few words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism. Then—

2. To collect the scripture account of baptism, together with some other texts, which may throw light upon the subject. Afterwards, in some following discourses, we may—

3. Produce evidence, that my definition of baptism is accurate and just. Then show—

4. How the apostles and primitive church understood this matter, and how they practised. When this is done, it will be easily seen—

5. What is the outward and visible part of Christian baptism. Then—

Lastly. The purport, end and design of the baptismal institution may call for our attention.

Agreeably to what is proposed, we are—

1. To define a few words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism. These are—

1. *Baptiſterion*, Greek; *baptiſterium*, and *lavacrum*, Latin; a font, a bath, a waſhing place, a veſſel to waſh the body in; Engliſh.

2. *Baptiſma* and *baptiſmos*, Greek; *Baptiſma* and *Lotio*, alſo *ablutio ſaura*, Latin; baptiſm, waſhing, ſacred, ceremonial waſhing; Engliſh.

3. *Baptiſtēs*, Greek; *baptiſta*, Latin; one who dips, a baptiſt; Engliſh.

4. *Baptizō*, Greek; *baptizo*, *mergo*, *lavo*, Latin; to baptize, to dip all over, to waſh; Engliſh.

5. *Louō*, Greek; *lavo*, Latin; to waſh, to rinſe, to bathe; Engliſh.

2. We are to collect the ſcripture account of baptiſm, together with ſome other texts which may throw light upon the ſubject.

We will begin with thoſe paſſages which ſpeak of the baptiſm of John.

1. *Matth.* iii. 5, 6, 7. Then went out to him Jeruſalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him IN Jordan, confeſſing their ſins. But when he ſaw many of the Phariſees and Sadducees come to his baptiſm, he ſaid unto them, O generation of vipers, &c.

2. Verſe 11. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, &c.

3. Verſes 13, 14, 15, 16. Then cometh Jeſus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him: but John forbade him, ſaying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and, comeſt thou to me? And Jeſus anſwering, ſaid unto him, Suffer it to be ſo now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteouſneſs: then he ſuffered him. And Jeſus, when he was baptized, went up ſtraightway out of the water.

4. *Matth.* xxi. 25, 26, 27. The baptiſm of John, whence was it, from heaven, or of men? And they reaſoned with themſelves, ſaying, If we ſhould ſay, From heaven, he will ſay unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But, if we ſhall ſay, Of men, we fear the people, for all hold John as a prophet. And they anſwered Jeſus and ſaid, We cannot tell, &c.

5. *Mark* i. 4, 5. John did baptize in the wilderneſs, and preach the baptiſm of repentance for the remiſſion of ſins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jeruſalem, and were all baptized of him IN the river of Jordan, confeſſing their ſins.

6. Verſes 8, 9, 10. I indeed have baptized you with water—And it came to paſs in thoſe days, that Jeſus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John IN Jordan; and ſtraightway coming up out of the water, &c.

7. *Mark* xi. 30. The baptiſm of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

8. *Luke* iii. 3. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptiſm of repentance for the remiſſion of ſins.

9. Verſes 7, 8. Then ſaid he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers——— bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.

10. Verſe 12. Then came alſo publicans to be baptized.

11. Verſe 16. I indeed baptize you with water.

12. Verſe 21. Now when all the people were baptized, it came to paſs that Jeſus alſo, being baptized, &c.

13. *Luke* vii. 29. 30. And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, juſtified God, being baptized with the baptiſm of John. But the Phariſees and lawyers rejected the counſel of God againſt themſelves, being not baptized of him.

14. *Luke* xx. 4. The baptiſm of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

15. *John* i. 25, 26. Why baptizeſt thou, then, if thou be not that Chriſt, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John anſwered them, ſaying, I baptize with water.

16. Verſe 28. Beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

17. Verſe 31. That he ſhould be made manifeſt to Iſrael, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

18. Verſe 33. He that ſent me to baptize with water.

19. *John* iii. 23. And John alſo was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, becauſe there was much water there; and they came and were baptized.

20. *John* iv. 1. The Phariſees had heard that Jeſus made and baptized more diſciples than John.

21. *John* x. 40. Beyond Jordan, into the place where John at firſt baptized.

22. *Acts* i. 5. John truly baptized with water.

23. Verſe 22. Beginning from the baptiſm of John.

24. *Acts* x. 37. After the baptiſm which John preached.

25. *Acts* xi. 16. John indeed baptized with water.

26. *Acts* xiii. 24. When John had firſt preached, before his coming, the baptiſm of repentance to all the people.

27. *Acts* xviii. 25. He (Apollos) ſpake and taught, dili-

gently, the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptiſm of John.

28. *Acts* xix. 3, 4. Unto what then were ye baptized? And they ſaid, Unto John's baptiſm. Then ſaid Paul, John verily baptized with the baptiſm of repentance, ſaying unto the people, that they ſhould believe on him, which ſhould come after him, that is, on Chriſt Jeſus.

We will next turn our attention to thoſe texts which mention Chriſt's baptiſm.

1. *Matth.* xxviii. 19. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.

2. *Mark* xvi. 15, 16. And he ſaid unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every creature: he that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved.

3. *John* iii. 5. Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, &c.

4. Verſe 22. After theſe things, came Jeſus and his diſciples into the land of Judea, and there tarried with them and baptized.

5. Verſe 26. Behold the ſame baptizeth, and all men come to him.

6. *John* iv. 1, 2. When therefore the Lord knew how the Phariſees had heard that Jeſus made and baptized more diſciples than John, (though Jeſus himſelf baptized not, but his diſciples.)

7. *Acts* iii. 38. Then Peter ſaid unto them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.

8. *Acts* ii. 41. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized.

9. *Acts* viii. 12, 13. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jeſus Chriſt, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himſelf believed alſo, and when he was baptized, &c.

10. *Acts* viii. 16. Only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jeſus.

11. Verſes 36, 37, 38, 39. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch ſaid, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip ſaid, If thou believeſt with all thine heart, thou

mayeſt. And he ſaid, I believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to ſtand ſtill. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, &c.

12. *Acts* ix. 18. And he (Saul) aroſe, and was baptized.

13. *Acts* x. 47, 48. Can any man forbid water, that theſe ſhould not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghoſt as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.

14. *Acts* xvi. 15. And when ſhe (Lydia) was baptized, and her houſehold.

15. Verſe 33. And was baptized, he (the jailer) and all his, ſtraightway.

16. *Acts* xviii. 8. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized.

17. *Acts* xix. 5. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jeſus.

18. *Acts* xxii. 19. And now, why tarrieſt thou? Ariſe and be baptized, and waſh away thy ſins, calling on the name of the Lord.

19. *Rom.* vi. 3, 4. Know ye not, that ſo many of us as were baptized into Chriſt Jeſus, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptiſm into death, that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life.

20. 1 *Cor.* i. 13, 14, 15 16, 17. Were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you but Criſpus and Gaius; leſt any ſhould ſay that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized alſo the houſehold of Stephanas: Beſides, I know not whether I baptized any other; for Chriſt ſent me not to baptize, but to preach the goſpel.

21. 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. But ye are waſhed.

22. 1 *Cor.* xii 13. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.*

23. 1 *Cor.* xv. 29. Elſe what ſhall they do that are baptized for the dead?

24. *Gal.* iii. 27. For as many of you as have been baptized into Chriſt, have put on Chriſt.

25. *Eph.* iv. 5. One baptiſm.

26. *Eph.* v. 26. That he might ſanctify and cleanſe it with the waſhing of water by the word.

* This intends, as ſome ſuppoſe, the Baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt.

27. *Col.* ii. 12. Buried with him in baptiſm, wherein alſo ye are riſen with him.

28. *Titus* iii. 5. According to his mercy he ſaved us, by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.

29 *Heb.* vi. 2. The doctrine of baptiſms.*

30. *Heb.* x. 22. Our bodies waſhed with pure water.

31. 1 *Peter* iii. 21. The like figure whereunto even baptiſm doth now ſave us, (not the putting away the filth of the fleſh, but the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt.)

Theſe, I believe, are all the texts in the New Teſtament which have a plain and obvious reference to either the baptiſm of John or of Chriſt. They afford us the ſum of all the knowledge which we can have of either the mode or ſubjects of Chriſtian baptiſm. What theſe paſſages ſay, we may believe; what they do not countenance, we may not believe. I will now ſet before you thoſe paſſages where waſhing is mentioned, and the Greek words which are uſed.

1. *Matth.* vi. 17. But thou, when thou faſteſt, anoint thy head, and (*nipſai*) waſh thy face.

2. *Matth.* xv. 2. Why do thy diſciples tranſgreſs the tradition of the elders? for they (*niptontai*) waſh not their hands when they eat bread.

3. *Matth.* xxvii. 24. When Pilate ſaw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water and (*apenipſato*) waſhed his hands.

4. *Mark* vii. 2. And when they ſaw ſome of his diſciples eat bread with defiled, that is to ſay with (*aniptois*) unwaſhen hands.

5. Verſe 3. For the Phariſees and all the Jews, except they (*nipſōntai*) waſh their hands oft, they eat not, &c.

6. Verſe 4. When they come from the market, except they (*baptiſōntai*) waſh, they eat not; and many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the (*baptiſmous*) waſhings of cups and pots, brazen veſſels, and of tables.

7. Verſe 5. But eat bread with (*aniptois*) unwaſhen hands.

8. Verſe 8. For, laying aſide the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the (*baptiſmous*) waſhing of pots and cups.

9. *Luke* v. 2. And they (*apeplunan*) were waſhing their nets.

* It is not certain that this hath any reference to Chriſtian baptiſm. If it have, it muſt refer not to that only. See Doddridge in loc.

10. *Luke* vii. 38. And ſtood at his feet, behind him, weeping, and began (*brechein*) to waſh his feet.

11. Verſe 44. And he turned to the woman, and ſaid unto Simon, Seeſt thou this woman? I entered into thine houſe, thou gaveſt me no water for my feet; but ſhe (*ebrexe*) hath waſhed my feet with tears.

12. *Luke* xi. 38. And when the Phariſees ſaw it, that he had not firſt (*ebaptiſthē*) waſhed before dinner.

13. *John* ix. 7. And ſaid unto him, Go, and (*nipſai*) waſh in the pool of Siloam;—he went his way therefore and (*enipſato*) waſhed.

14. Verſe 15. Then again the Phariſees alſo aſked him how he had received his ſight: he ſaid unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I (*enipſamēn*) waſhed and do ſee.

15. *John* xiii. 5. After that he poured water into a baſon, and began (*niptein*) to waſh the diſciples' feet.

16. Verſe 6. And Peter ſaid unto him, Lord, doſt thou (*nipteis*) waſh my feet.

17. Ver. 5. Peter ſaith unto him, Thou ſhalt never (*nipſēs*) waſh my feet. Jeſus anſwered him, If I (*nipſo*) waſh thee not, thou haſt no part with me.

18. Verſe 10. Jeſus ſaith to him, He that is (*oleloumenos*) waſhed, needeth not ſave (*nipſaſthai*) to waſh his feet, &c.

19. Verſe 14. If I then, your Lord and Maſter (*enipſa*) have waſhed your feet, ye alſo ought (*niptein*) to waſh one another's feet.

20. *Acts* ix. 37. And it came to paſs in thoſe days that ſhe was ſick and died, whom when they had (*louſantes*) waſhed.

21. *Acts* xvi. 33. And he took them the ſame hour of the night, and (*elouſen*) waſhed their ſtripes.

22. *Acts* xxii. 16. And now, why tarrieſt thou? Ariſe and be baptized, and (*apolouſai*) waſh away thy ſins.

23. 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. And ſuch were ſome of you; but ye (*apelouſagthē*) are waſhed.

24. *Eph.* v. 26. That he might ſanctify and cleanſe it with (*loutrō*) the waſhing of water by the word.

25. 1 *Tim.* v. 10. If ſhe (*enipſen*) have waſhed the ſaints' feet.

26. *Titus* iii. 5. By the (*loutrou*) waſhing of regeneration.

27. *Heb.* ix. 10. Which ſtood only in meats and drinks, and (*diaphorois baptiſmois*) divers waſhings.

28. *Heb.* x. 22. Having our bodies (*leloumenoi*) waſhed with pure water.

29. 2 *Peter* ii. 22. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb—and the ſow that (*louſamenē*) was waſhed, &c.

30. *Rev.* i. 5. Unto him that loved us and (*louſanti*) waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood.

31. *Rev.* vii. 14. Theſe are they who came out of great tribulation, and (*eplunan*) have waſhed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.*

Thoſe paſſages which make mention of SPRINKLING, with the Greek words uſed, now call for your attention.

1. Heb. ix. 13. For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the aſhes of an heifer (*rantizouſa*) ſprinkling the unclean, &c.

2. Verſe 19. He (Moſes) took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and ſcarlet wool, and hyſſop, and (*errantiſe*) ſprinkled both the book and all the people.

3. *Heb.* x. 22. Having our hearts (*errantiſmenoi*) ſprinkled from an evil conſcience.

4. *Heb.* xi. 28 Through faith he kept the paſſover and the (*proſchuſin*) ſprinkling of blood.

5. *Heb.* xii. 24. And to the blood of (*rantiſmou*) ſprinkling.

6. 1 *Peter* i. 2. And to the (*rantiſmon*) ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt.

Laſtly. You will now give attention for a moment to thoſe paſſages of ſcripture where the word DIP is mentioned.

1. *Luke* xvi. 24. That he may (*bapsē*) dip his finger in water.

2. *Matth.* xxvi. 23. And he anſwered and ſaid, He that (*embapſas*) dippeth his hand with me in the diſh.

3. *Mark* xiv. 20. And he anſwered and ſaid unto them, It is one of the twelve that (*embaptomenos*) dippeth with me in the diſh.

4. *John* xiii. 26. And he anſwered, He it is to whom I ſhall give a ſop when I have (*bapſas*) dipped it; and when he had (*embapſas*) dipped the ſop, &c.

5 *Rev.* xix. 13 And he was clothed with a veſture (*bebammenon*) dipped in blood.

A few remarks on what we have paſſed over will cloſe the preſent diſcourſe.

1. We ſee that all the words which appertain to the ordinance of baptiſm, ſignify the ſame which they would, provided immerſion were the ſcripture mode.

* *Plunō* properly ſignifies to waſh clothes; as *louō*, the body; and *niptō*, the face and hands.

2. We see that the subject of baptism is very repeatedly mentioned in the New Testament. It is brought to view expressly in about threescore passages.

3. Whenever baptism is mentioned, and neither the word *baptizō* nor *baptismos* is used, the word substituted plainly intimates that bathing or washing the body all over, is the mode; for this is the signification of *louō*, which is the word, and the only word, which the scriptures employ in the room of *baptizō*.

4. Whenever *baptizō* or *baptismos* is translated washing, a ceremonial and not a common washing is manifestly intended.

5. We find that in all the places where sprinkling is mentioned, the original words, *rhantizō*, and *proschusin*, are very different from *baptizō* and *baptismos*.

6. You will please to observe, that wherever we find, through the New Testament, the word, to dip, it is from the same theme whence *baptizō* comes:

7. We see that every thing looks as though *immersion* might be the *mode;* and, as for *sprinkling*, there is, to say the least, nothing which *looks* like it.

SERMON II.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

THE business which we are now upon depends very much upon the definitions of certain words, and principally upon the definition of the word *baptize*, and upon the certain evidence of such definition or definitions being accurate and just. For we can no otherwise understand what God the Lord saith unto us, than by knowing the import of the words by which he is pleased to communicate his will. The great Teacher who came from God, hath doubtless communicated his mind so explicitly that the humble in heart may know the common matters which relate to faith and practice. If we devoutly search the scriptures, and seek wisdom as silver, and

ſearch for her as for hid treaſures, God will make us to underſtand knowledge, and to ſerve him with acceptable practice. The Spirit of the Lord hath moſt certainly choſen acceptable words, words of definite meaning. We are to ſearch out their ſignification, and to be obedient. I cannot judge of their ſignification for you, nor can I anſwer for the judgment which you ſhall make up, nor can you for me.

I am by my office obliged to exhibit, ſo far as I can, all thoſe divine truths which relate to faith and practice. I am obliged to believe and practiſe according to the beſt light which I can gather, or have in any way afforded me. You are under ſimilar obligations.

Whilſt we proceed, I wiſh you to believe fully two things; one is, that truth, if believed and practiſed, will not, on the whole, harm you. The other is, that the moſt ſure way to acquire truth is, to be of a humble and obedient mind, ready to receive the truth. For God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

In the preceding diſcourſe, we attended to the definition of certain words which appertain to the ordinance of baptiſm; and then collected the ſcripture account of baptiſm, together with ſome other texts which are ſuppoſed to throw light upon the ſubject under conſideration. In this diſcourſe we are—

3. To produce the more direct evidence that my definitions of baptiſm and to baptize are accurate and juſt.

The definition which I gave of baptiſm was, a *waſhing*, a *ſacred*, a *ceremonial* waſhing. I will now add to this definition, that it is immerſion, or dipping one all over in water.

The definition which I gave of the word *baptizō* is, to dip all over, to waſh. I will alſo add, that the word ſignifies, to waſh the body, or any thing, all over. What I mean is, that theſe are the ſignification of the words *baptiſma* and *baptizō*, which are rendered baptiſm, and, to baptize.

I am now to produce evidence, that this is a juſt and accurate definition of the words.

You will obſerve, that this is quite different from the *ſubjects* of baptiſm; that is another ſubject, which muſt be attended to in its place.

The evidence which I have to offer, in order to fix preciſely the juſt ſenſe and meaning of the words *baptiſm* and to *baptize*, is contained in the following facts. The

1ſt. Compriſes what the Greek Lexicon, Concordance, and two Engliſh Dictionaries, teſtify of the words.

Schrevelius's Lexicon tells us the import of *baptisso* is *to dye, washings*. Also that to *baptize* signifies to *wash*, to put under water, or under any other liquid thing; to sink, dip in, duck or plunge over head, to immerse.

Butterworth's Concordance says, Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, whereby a professed believer in Christ is, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, immersed in and covered with water, and then raised up out of it, as a sign of his fellowship with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection, and a sign of his own death to sin, and resurrection to newness of life here, and to life eternal hereafter. The same Concordance defines the word to baptize thus—to dip, immerse, or plunge.

Entick's Dictionary says, that—*Baptism* is a sacrament that admits into the church.—*Baptizer*, one who christens, or dips.—*Baptistery*, the place of baptizing at, a font.—*Baptize*, to christen, plunge, overwhelm.—*Baptized*, admitted to baptism, dipt, &c.

Bailey's Dictionary, speaking of baptism, or rather the place in which persons were baptized, says, *Baptistery* is either the place or vessel in which persons are baptized. In ancient times, this being performed by immersion, the persons so initiated went into a river and were plunged; but in the time of Constantine the Great, chapels or places on purpose to baptize in, were built in great cities, which was performed in the eastern and warmer countries by dipping the persons; but in process of time, in the western and colder countries, sprinkling was substituted in place of dipping; which was the origin of our fonts in churches.

2 I will repeat some of the attendant or circumstantial facts, which have relation to the ordinance of baptism, that you may look at them and judge for yourselves, whether the preceding definitions appear just.

John baptized in the river Jordan.

He was baptizing in Enon, because there was much water there.

The name of the place, where baptism was administered, is *baptisterion*, or *baptistery*, which signifies a place in which to wash the body all over.

Baptism signifies to dip, plunge, immerse, or wash the body all over in water.

Baptizer signifies one who dips, plunges, or washes the body all over in water.

To baptize signifies to plunge under water, to dip, or to wash the body all over.

To be baptized is to be plunged, immersed, or washed all over in water.

Does this whole matter, taking so many of the words, and some circumstances, and finding them all so well agreeing together, help you, in any degree, to the definition of the word *baptize*? Supposing these things be facts, and you had never had any prejudice for or against the word baptize, would you be able to gather the meaning of it from what hath been said?

There is an objection dormant in the minds of some of you, which should be now awakened, lest it prejudice your minds from the truth.

The objection is, Do not the words signify some other things, as well as those which have been mentioned?

Ans. I have thought they did: but I have searched in several dictionaries, and read many authors upon the words, yet have not found one dictionary which has given a definition of the words different from what I have given; nor one author who has been able to show, that the true meaning of the words is any otherwise than what I have mentioned. Besides, the very words of argumentation which Dr. Lawson, Mr. Cleaveland and others have taken, by which to prove that *baptizo* hath some other signification than to dip, immerse, to bury or overwhelm, is an implicit confession that they were not able to prove any such thing. It is also a strong presumptive argument, that no different signification can be found.

Their argument is this: *Bapto* signifies, in one instance, in the Old Testament, to wet with the dew of heaven. *Baptizo* is the offspring of *bapto*, and consequently may be taken in the same sense. This argument is of the same weight with the following: My father believes in sprinkling, as being baptism: I am his offspring, and consequently I believe the same; when the fact is I am largely convinced that it is no such thing. Would gentlemen employ such an argument, did not their cause labour? Such an argument, when it stands, as it does, at the front of all their supposed evidence, is an implicit confession, that they cannot prove what they wish to.*

* Since writing the above, I have met with *Ainsworth's Latin Dictionary*, which gives the English of *baptizo*, to *sprinkle*. It hath, indeed, been matter of no little surprise, that all modern dictionary compilers have not given the true sense of the word *baptize*, to sprinkle; for it, indeed, is the significant

This matter will have farther attention in another place.

3. The words *baptiſmos* and *baptizō* have two, and only two, tranſlations in the New-Teſtament. Theſe two are, *baptiſm* and *waſhing*. They are very generaliy rendered, *baptiſm*, or to *baptize*. This is their uſual tranſlation. But ſeveral times in *Mark*, *Luke*, and in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, they are rendered waſhing. As the waſhing of pots, and cups, and brazen veſſels and tables, or ſeats on which they reclined, when they ate meat; and *diaphorois baptiſmois* in Hebrew is rendered *divers waſhings*.

In the law given by Moſes, the people were, on many occaſions, to bathe their bodies, and waſh their clothes in water; and alſo to put their pots and cups and brazen veſſels into water, that they might be cleanſed from ceremonial uncleanneſs. To theſe legal ceremonies the Phariſees had added traditional ones, which were, no doubt, obſerved in the ſame manner as thoſe appointed by the Lord. If ſo, then the waſhing of pots, &c. in *Mark*, was putting them into water, as the command was to do, *Levit.* xi. 32. The divers waſhings in *Heb.* ix. 10. were ceremonial waſhings, or bathings, in which the body was waſhed, or dipped. *Numb.* xix. 19. This being the caſe, does not this matter go to confirm, or determine, what is the definition of baptiſm?

4. We will now mention a few noted witneſſes, who have given their teſtimony as to the meaning of the word *baptizō*.

Calvin, a very warm oppoſer of the Baptiſts, ſhall, as a witneſs in this cauſe, ſpeak firſt. His teſtimony is, Howbeit, the very word of baptizing ſignifieth to dip."

Zanchius, as brought forward by the Rev. Mr. Butterworth,

which the practice of many Chriſtians, for two or three hundred years paſt, has given to the word.

Had all lexicons, and all dictionaries, for the two laſt centuries, borne united teſtimony, that one ſenſe of the word *baptizō* was to ſprinkle, it would not have been half ſo unaccountable as it now is that they have ſo generally retained the ancient and primitive ſignifications, and refuſed to adopt the modern one, which prejudice, convenience and modern practice have given to it. Indeed, could a thouſand modern lexicons and dictionaries be found, which ſhould ſay, to *ſprinkle* is one ſenſe in which *baptizō* is uſed, it would all come to nothing, unleſs they ſhould teſtify that this is one of its ancient and primitive ſignifications: and even then, it would come to no more than this, that the word is leſs determinate, than it is now ſuppoſed to be. Could they do this, it would be ſtill nothing, unleſs they prove the ſcriptures uſe it in this ſenſe, which they cannot do. But if they could, it would not be fully to their point, unleſs they can ſhow that it is thus uſed in application to the ordinance.

ſhall be my next witneſs. He ſays, *baptizō* is to immerſe, plunge under, to overwhelm in water.

I could quote, or bring forward, a multitude of witneſſes, and all from our own order, the Pedobaptiſts, to prove the ſame point. But in the mouth of two or three witneſſes, if they be good ones, every word ſhall be eſtabliſhed. We will therefore produce but one more; that ſhall be good Dr. Owen. "For the original and natural ſignification of it (*baptizō*) ſignifies to dip, to plunge."

5. I will mention to you a Greek word, which Paul repeatedly uſes, as ſignifying the ſame thing as *baptizō*, and where he means the ſame thing, namely, baptiſm.

In 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. Paul, ſpeaking to the Corinthians of divers kinds of vile ſinners, ſays, "And ſuch were ſome of you; but ye are waſhed," &c.

Eph. v. 26. That he might ſanctify and cleanſe it (the church) with the *waſhing* of water, by the word.

Heb. x. 22. Let us draw near with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith, having our hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and our *bodies waſhed* with pure water.

The Pedobaptiſts acknowledge that *waſhing*, in theſe texts, means *baptiſm*, and I know not that any of them deny it. Baptiſm and waſhing appear to be uſed as ſynonymous words, or as words ſignifying the ſame thing. If this be the caſe, then the two words, *baptizō* and *louō*, which are tranſlated, one to baptize, and the other to waſh, mean the ſame thing, and are thus intended by the Apoſtle. Then, provided we can determine what *louō* means, we can alſo determine what is the ſignification of *baptizō*. This word, *louō*, ſignifies to waſh, and to bathe the body in water; for thus it is generally if not univerſally uſed, and from it is *loutron*, a bath, or place to waſh the body in. Beſides, the word *louō* is never uſed in the New-Teſtament, nor any where elſe, to my knowledge, to ſignify either ſprinkling or common waſhing. Its appropriate ſenſe appears to be, bathing, or waſhing any thing all over; as you may ſee, *Acts* ix. 37. and xvi. 33; 2 *Peter* ii. 22; which are the only places where I recollect the word *louō* is uſed, ſave where the ordinance of baptiſm appears to be referred to. This being the caſe, the matter appears juſt as it would, provided the ordinance included the bathing of the body in water. This is letting ſcripture interpret itſelf; and the interpretation which it gives is, baptiſm is bathing, or waſhing the body in water. This, therefore, may help you a little towards determining in

your minds what is the ſignification of *baptizō*. For *louō* is repeatedly uſed in ſcripture, as importing the ſame mode of waſhing which is commanded in the ordinance of baptiſm.

6. Paul's deſcription of the mode of baptizing, or of what is done to thoſe who are baptized, may afford you farther light upon the ſubject.

Paul brings this matter up to the Roman and Coloſſian Chriſtians, as a matter well known to them. To the former he ſays, *Rom.* vi. 4. Therefore we are buried with him by baptiſm into death, that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life. To the other he ſays, *Col.* ii. 12. Buried with him in baptiſm, wherein alſo ye are riſen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raiſed him from the dead.

Upon theſe texts, Dr. Doddridge has the following note. "It ſeems the part of candour to confeſs, that here is an alluſion to baptiſm by immerſion, as was moſt uſual in theſe early times." Here the good doctor ſays, "as was *moſt uſual*:" this I ſhall, by and by, explain to you."

In the mean time, you will pleaſe to pay due attention to what was done to thoſe who were baptized, and which appears to be familiar to the Roman and Coloſſian Chriſtians. The Apoſtle makes no remarks, and explains nothing to them, but ſpeaks to them as though they would and did well underſtand what he meant, when he ſaid, "We are buried with him by baptiſm unto death;" and, "Buried with him in baptiſm." It is plain fact, that Paul thus ſpeaks, and it alſo appears, very plainly, that he had no apprehenſion but that he ſhould be underſtood.

Biſhop Hoadly's declaration appears to be much in point: 'If baptiſm,' ſays he, 'had been THEN,' *i. e.* in the apoſtles' days, 'performed as it is NOW among us, we ſhould never have ſo much as heard of this form of expreſſion, of dying and riſing again in this rite.'*

Theſe things I have thought it my duty to lay before you, that I might aſſiſt you, by a number of plain facts, to form a judgment, each one for himſelf, what the meaning of baptiſm is, and what the word to *baptize* ſignifies.

I have ſtill more light upon this ſubject, and ſhall, in the next diſcourſe, lay it within your view. It will perhaps be, to ſome of you, more convincing than any thing which I have as yet exhibited. But previouſly I will make one obſervation,

* Ten Letters.

and it is this: all the evidence which we have been exhibiting, we have on one side of the question; and, if I mistake not, none on the other to counteract it: for if my memory and judgment be correct, the wisest and best of men, of our own denomination, have asserted, that these things are so. I do not say that all good men have; but the most learned have, and some who have appeared very pious.

But you will say, Why have they not practised differently, if they have thus believed? I am not answerable for their practice; but, if the Lord will, I shall, ere long, give you the reasons which they assign.

I shall only add, for the present, two or three consequences, and then leave the subject for your consideration.

1. The Baptists have, against our practice, and for theirs, that kind of evidence which is, perhaps, in all cases but the present, considered the most unequivocal and certain. This evidence is given in by a cloud of witnesses, who, whilst they are bearing their testimony, condemn themselves every sentence they utter. If these men, who are confessed by both sides to be both pious and learned, may be believed, the cause will most certainly be determined against us; for there was never a clearer case. They unitedly testify that the scripture mode of baptism is immersion, but omit the practice. In this they condemn themselves.

2. The scripture sense, and, for aught appears, the only sense, of baptism, is, dipping, immersion, burying in water, being overwhelmed, and the like.

3. We are brought to this dilemma, either to commence Baptists, as to the mode, or do as our fathers have done, confess the truth in theory, and neglect it in practice.

SERMON III.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

MEN, brethren, and fathers, we are still upon a very important subject—a subject which highly concerns us as Christians—a subject in which our feelings, our reputation, and

our peace too, may not be a little concerned. Many things, not to say every thing, call upon us not to go too fast; and, at the same time, obedience to our common Lord forbids all backwardness, in pursuing where his truth and Spirit lead us.

All which I request of you is, with candour hear, with readiness obey, what truth shall dictate.

Should we, after long and serious deliberation, be obliged to believe and practise differently from what we have heretofore done, we shall be much exposed to two things: one is, to be reviled; the other, to revile again. What we shall need is, patience to bear the one, and grace that we may avoid the other.

Perhaps human nature is more inclined to nothing than to an overbearing spirit. It is perfectly consonant with human nature to make ourselves, and not the scriptures, the standard of both faith and practice. The natural consequence of this is, censure against all who dare to think, or act, as we do not. To guard you against unreasonable and common prejudice, I will, for your consideration, suggest a thought, which we may do well to remember; and it is this: many, who shall believe and practise as we have long done, may be as honest and faithful as we then were. This being true, the following consequence is plain, that the line of conduct which the Baptists ought to have practised, in months and years past, towards us, the same, if we be Baptists, will it become us to pursue with relation to others. It requires not much foresight to discover, that we shall need much of that wisdom which is profitable to direct.

Whilst it may be indispensable with us to use every prudent mean to diffuse that light which God may graciously afford us, it will be our wisdom to do every thing in such a manner as not to heighten, but, if possible, to lower the prejudices of good people.

Whilst you, my dear friends and people, know that light chaseth away the darkness, and that truth will ultimately prevail against every error; I solicit your candour and prayerful attention, that error may not be retained, or prevail against any of us, to our wounding.

Our attention hath already been called to the definition of a number of words, which relate to the ordinance of baptism, to the scripture account of baptism, together with some other texts, which were supposed to throw light upon the subject, and also to some evidence in support of the given definitions. As the great question turns upon what is commanded, and as

that cannot be otherwise known than by making sure the import of the words used, we shall therefore search for additional light and certainty, by inquiring—

4. How the apostles and primitive Christians understood this matter, and how they practised.

If this can be made plain, then, perhaps, your minds will be satisfied, and your judgments made up.

I proceed to lay the evidence before you.

There appears no necessity of spending time to produce evidence that the apostles understood the matter to be as I have proved to you that it was: for they, no doubt, understood the words which Christ spake, and the commands which he gave: besides, if the apostles and primitive church practised thus, it is evident that they thus understood it; for doubtless they, especially the apostles, were honest men, and practised as they understood Jesus Christ to have directed them.

I will here make two observations to you; and I wish you to remember them.

The first is, no person should, especially in important matters, make up his judgment, that any particular subject is true, till he has evidence of its truth.

The other is, the best proof which the nature of any case admits of, may and ought to be considered as evidence, and so received by us, as to those things we are called to believe and practise.

There are different degrees of evidence: the highest kind produces knowledge. When the evidence is small, it produces a weak and dubious belief. But where it is such that, on supposition the thing be true, the evidence could not be greater than it is, there we are obliged to yield our assent, and we do violence to our reason if we will not believe.

The evidence, which we have with respect to the practice of the apostles in the matter of baptizing, differs in degree, and, in some measure, in kind, from the evidence which we have respecting the practice of the church in later ages as to the same matter. But if we have, with respect to the practice of both, the best evidence which the different cases admit of, we are under obligation to believe the evidence good, and the facts true which are supported by it.

We have much the same kind of evidence with respect to the practice of the apostles, which we have as to the practice of the church for many ages after them. Mr. Baxter, bishop Hoadly, and others, testify, that the apostolic practice was,

immerſion. We have, moreover, as to their practice, a much higher kind of evidence. In ſupport of their practice, I ſhall produce the beſt kind of evidence, and afterwards, whilſt ſpeaking of the practice of the church in ſucceeding ages, may occaſionally bring forward ſome of the other kind of evidence, in ſupport of the apoſtles' practice.

As to the practice of the apoſtles, in the adminiſtration of baptiſm, I obſerve, we have in the ſcriptures four diſtinct ſources of evidence. The

1ſt. is this. When baptiſm is mentioned by the diſciples and apoſtles, and the common word is not uſed, they uniformly employ one particular word, and this word is of very determinate ſignification, and expreſſes the bathing, or waſhing, of the body in water, as *Heb.* x. 22: Having our bodies (*leloumenoi*) *waſhed* with pure water. *Acts* xxii. 16. Ariſe and be baptized, and (*apolouſai*) waſh away thy ſins. 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. But ye are (*apolouſaſthē*) *waſhed.* By the determinate ſignification of this word, their practice appears to be immerſion.

2. The apoſtles were commanded to dip, immerſe, or plunge all over in water, the perſons whom they admitted to this ordinance. This is evident from the determinate ſignification of the word to baptize. Says the command, Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c. We have before proved what is the ſignification of this word, and conſequently what Chriſt commanded his diſciples, when he ſent them to baptize.

I do not now ſay that the apoſtles immerſed any; but this is what I ſay, they were commanded thus to do. I leave it for you to determine, whether they did, or whether they did not.

3. I obſerve to you, that the New-Teſtament, wherever it ſpeaks of the apoſtles baptizing any, ſays they immerſed them, or dipt them all over in water. For this is the plain, literal and common, if not the only ſignification of the word. I ſtill leave it with you to determine whether the apoſtles did, or did not, practiſe thus.

Leſt ſome of you may have forgotten what I have before proved to you, and conſequently entertain ſome doubt whether baptiſm may not ſometimes ſignify the application of water in a different way; we will make two or three obſervations.

1. The plain, literal and common ſignification of the word is to immerſe, overwhelm, dip, or to plunge all over.

2. There appears to be no evidence that it is ever uſed ſo much as once, in any part of the Bible, to ſignify the applica-

tion of water in any other sense. Even in those passages where I have in time past supposed that the meaning might be, and probably was, *washing* without immersion, the sense appears to be putting into water or immersion, and not what we commonly understand by the word washing. Of this you may be convinced by considering the treatment to which the Jews were accustomed with respect to those vessels which were ceremonially unclean. They were to baptize them, or put them into water, as you may see, *Levit.* xi. 32. "And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack; *whatsoever vessel* it be, wherein any work is done, it must be *put into water*, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed."

3. I will observe to you that it would most visibly be a reflection upon the great Teacher who came from God, to suppose that he should, when appointing a positive institution, use words aside from their plain and commonly received sense; that too without giving any intimation of his using the words in any sense differing from the common, especially when he was setting up a new institution, about which his most faithful followers could, in all succeeding generations, know nothing but from the words used in and about the institution. Does not all this appear plain and reasonable?

Now the Bible in the plain, literal and common sense of the words which it uses, says, the apostles dipt, plunged or immersed all such as they admitted to baptism. You will judge for yourselves whether the apostles practised thus, or whether they did not.

4. The practice of the apostles is farther illustrated and confirmed by what Paul tells the Roman and Colossian Christians, with respect to what took place when they received the ordinance of baptism. He says to the former, "We are buried with him by baptism into death:" To the other he says, "Buried with him *in* baptism" Paul speaks of this matter as a thing perfectly understood by Christians in his time, and used it as an argument to promote their weanedness from the world, and growth in sanctification. But have you not either passed over these and similar passages, without noticing them, or considered them rather hard to be understood? But how easy is it to understand them, provided the apostles practised as the scriptures say they did! I still leave it with you to determine for yourselves how the apostles practised.

This is the beſt evidence which the nature of the ſubject admits. This matter, the apoſtles' practice, was tranſacted many ages ſince. We have the teſtimony of the ſcriptures as to what it was; this is evidence enough: however, we ſhall occaſionally add the teſtimony of men.

We ſhall now attend to the practice of the church, and diſcover, if we can, how it was for ages after the apoſtles. The beſt evidence which this part of my ſubject admits, is that of human teſtimony.* I by no means reſt the merit of the cauſe on this evidence. At the ſame time, it may weaken the prejudices of ſome, and be a mean of confirming others in the belief of the truth.

It appears ſo plain a caſe that we can hardly refuſe aſſent to it, that as the church hath for a ſeries of ages practiſed, ſo have they believed. When we ſhall ſee what their practice hath been, we ſhall the more eaſily concede that their belief hath been ſimilar.

What is now before us is to produce and to receive evidence relative to the practice of the primitive church. It is the following:—

1. This evidence conſiſts in the united teſtimony of both thoſe who practiſed the adminiſtration of the ordinance by immerſion, and thoſe who uſed ſprinkling, and called it baptizing.

Moſheim, a very noted church hiſtorian, and not very friendly to the Baptiſts, bears direct teſtimony that John, Chriſt's forerunner, and the church in the firſt ages of Chriſtianity, practiſed immerſion as the mode of baptizing. The following you may take as a ſample of his evidence. "The exhortations of this reſpectable meſſenger (John) were not without effect; and thoſe who, moved by his ſolemn admonition, had formed the reſolution of correcting their evil diſpoſitions, and amending their lives, were initiated into the kingdom of the Redeemer by the ceremony of immerſion, or baptiſm."†

Speaking of the church in the ſecond century, he ſays, "The perſons that were to be baptized, after they had repeated the creed, confeſſed and renounced their ſins, and particularly the devil in his pompous allurements, were immerſed under water,

* Chriſt's promiſe to his apoſtles, to their ſucceſſors, and to the Church may aſſure us, that the ordinance of baptiſm, by which his people ſhould be diſtinguiſhed from the world, would ever continue. Therefore could we know what the Church hath always practiſed, eſpecially that part of it which hath been moſt ſeparate from the world, then their practice would afford a ſtrong argument in favour of what the inſtitution intended.

† Century I. chap. iii ſect 3.

and received into Chriſt's kingdom by a ſolemn invocation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, according to the *expreſs command* of our bleſſed Lord.* The Doctor ſpeaking of ſome inferior ſects of the ſeventeenth century, and particularly of a ſect called Collegiants, ſays, "Thoſe adult perſons, that deſire to be baptized, receive the ſacrament of baptiſm according to the ancient and primitive manner of celebrating that inſtitution, even by *immerſion*."†

Mr. Bailey, in his Etymological Engliſh Dictionary, ſays, "In ancient times, this (baptiſm) being performed by immerſion, the perſons ſo initiated went into a river, &c. and were plunged."

John Calvin, in his *Inſtitutions*, Book IV. chap. xv. ſect. 19, ſays, "It is certain that the manner of dipping was uſed of the old church."

Here are three ſubſtantial witneſſes. Theſe might be ſufficient, ſeeing there is not one to be found who will, or dares, give direct and poſitive teſtimony againſt the truth of what theſe affirm. But ſince there are an hoſt who ſtand ready to give in their teſtimony, even againſt their own practice, we will hear what two more of them will teſtify relative to the important cauſe now on trial.

Theſe two ſhall be Dr. Cave and the famous Mr. Baxter.

Dr. Cave, a great ſearcher into antiquity, ſays, "That the party baptized was wholly immerſed, or put under water, which was the *common*, *conſtant* and *univerſal* cuſtom of thoſe times; whereby they did ſignificantly expreſs the great end and effects of baptiſm, repreſenting Chriſt's death, burial and reſurrection, and, in conformity thereto, our dying unto ſin, the deſtruction of its power, and our reſurrection to a new courſe of life," &c.‡

Moſt remarkable is the teſtimony which Mr. Baxter gives to this truth, in the following words: "It is commonly confeſſed by us to the Baptiſts, (as our commentators declare) that in the apoſtles' time, the baptized were dipped over head in water, and this ſignifieth their profeſſion both of believing the burial and reſurrection of Chriſt, and of their own dying unto ſin, and living, or riſing again to newneſs of life, or being buried and riſen again with Chriſt, as the apoſtle expoundeth baptiſm, Col. ii. 12, and Rom. iv. 6. And though (ſaith he) we have thought it lawful to diſuſe the manner of dipping and to uſe leſs water, yet we preſume not to change the uſe and ſignification of it; ſo then

* Century II. part ii. chap. v. ſect. 12. † Vol. v. p. 488.
‡ Ten Letters.

he that ſignally profeſſes to die and riſe again in baptiſm with Chriſt, doth *ſignally* profeſs *ſaving faith* and *repentance*; but *this* do all they that are baptized according to the apoſtolic practice."*

As theſe witneſſes teſtify, ſo do all learned and pious men who have critically attended to this ſubject, and afterwards given in any direct and poſitive evidence upon the matter.

2. The evidence as to the practice of the primitive church, conſiſts in the teſtimony of men to this truth, that the church did for thirteen hundred years practiſe immerſion, ſome extreme caſes excepted.

The only evidence which I purpoſe to give in ſupport of this for the preſent, is the teſtimony of the author of *Ten Letters* to Biſhop Hoadly upon the mode and ſubjects of baptiſm, and the confeſſion of Dr. Lathrop that it was even ſo.

The author of the *Letters* aſſerts that this was the practice of the church for thirteen hundred years after the commencement of the Chriſtian era. Dr. Lathrop aſſents that this was the fact; as you may ſee, by reading his four ſermons on baptiſm, where he gives theſe letters a particular attention, and is ſuppoſed to aſſent, where he makes no objection.

3. All the churches in Europe, Aſia and Africa, ever have done, and do now, practiſe immerſion, ſave thoſe who are now, or have been, under the juriſdiction of the Pontiffs of Rome.

The ſame witneſſes who bore their teſtimony to the laſt particular, give in their evidence in ſupport of this, and in the ſame way; the one aſſerting the fact, the other aſſenting that it is even ſo.

4. The very reaſons which have been given and which are ſtill given to juſtify the contrary practice, are a plain confeſſion that immerſion, or burying the ſubjects under water, was the practice of the apoſtles and primitive church in the ordinance of baptiſm, and what Chriſt commanded to be done.

The reaſons which are alleged why ſprinkling may be ſubſtituted for immerſion, are, the want of health, in ſome inſtances where they ſuppoſe baptiſm to be neceſſary; the weakneſs of conſtitution with reſpect to ſome, and the coldneſs of climate with reſpect to many, and as to all in northern climes in the wintry ſeaſon. Here is a ſilent acknowledgment, that it is not the inſtitution, that it is not the permiſſion of Chriſt, but mere accidental and local circumſtances, which make it lawful to lay by

* Ten Letters.

the command of Chriſt, and to receive in its ſtead the precepts and commandments of men.

Mr. Bailey ſays, in his Dictionary, that baptiſm was performed in the eaſtern and warmer countries by dipping the perſons all over; but in proceſs of time, in the weſtern and colder countries, ſprinkling was ſubſtituted in the place of dipping.

Dr. Lathrop in his ſermons implicitly confeſſes the following extracts to be both true and genuine.

Mr. Baxter, in his *Paraphraſe on the New-Teſtament*, obſerves on Matth. iii. 6. "We grant that baptiſm then was by waſhing the whole body; and did not the difference of our cold country, as to that hot one, teach us to remember, 'I will have mercy and not ſacrifice,' it ſhould be ſo here."

The author of the *Letters to Biſhop Hoadly*, in the twenty-third page, writes thus: "Mr. Baxter, we have already ſeen, excuſes the matter by the coldneſs of our climate. Calvin, the celebrated reformer of Geneva, obſerves in his Expoſition of Acts viii. 38, 'We ſee here what was the baptiſmal rite among the ancients, for they plunged the whole body in the water.' Now it is the cuſtom for the miniſter to ſprinkle only the body or head, and he too excuſes this ſprinkling, but how, I cannot well recollect, not having his book at hand."

Biſhop Burnet, though he thus deſcribes the primitive baptiſm, "With no other garments but that might ſerve to cover nature, they at firſt laid them down, as a man is laid in the grave, and then they ſaid theſe words, I baptize, or waſh, thee in the name, &c. Then they raiſed them up again, and clean garments were put upon them; from whence came the phraſes of being baptized into Chriſt's death, of being buried with him by baptiſm into death, of our being riſen with Chriſt, and of our putting on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; of putting off the old man, and putting on the new,"—and though he juſtly obſerves that ſacraments are poſitive precepts, which are to be meaſured only by the inſtitution, in which there is not room left for us to carry them any farther;—yet forgetting his own meaſure of the inſtitution, viz. the party baptized was laid down in the water, as a man is laid in the grave, he ſays, "The danger in cold climates may be a very good reaſon for changing the form of baptiſm to ſprinkling."*

I propoſe for the preſent to note but one quotation more, and that ſhall be in the words of Dr. Wall, as quoted in the *Letters*.

* Burnet's Expoſition of the Thirty-nine Articles.

The Doctor, in giving the reasons why, in Queen Elizabeth's reign, the custom of dipping was laid aside, observes, "It being allowed to weak children to be baptized by affusion, many sound ladies and gentlemen first, and then, by degrees, the common people, would obtain the favour of the priest to have their children pass for weak children, too tender to endure dipping in the water."* Now,

6. It may be easy for you to gather what is the outward and visible part of the ordinance of baptism.

It is to immerse proper subjects in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This is the outward and visible part of baptism, the scriptures being judge; this literal and plain meaning of the command being judge; the practice of the apostles being judge; the practice of the church for more than a thousand years being judge; and even if we appeal to those who refuse to practise thus, they add their testimony, that it is what was commanded. They pretend not to say that any new command hath been given, or that the old one hath ever been changed. What shall we say to these things!!!

I conclude by submitting a question, and a few inferences, for your consideration.

The question is, If immersion be from heaven, and sprinkling from men, by what authority do we continue the practice?

The inferences are—

1. We, who call ourselves Pedobaptists, are as a house divided against itself. To say the least, we appear thus. Our champions will look us in the face, and assure us, that the Baptists have plain scripture for their mode, and yet we have a right to choose on the score of convenience, &c. what mode is pleasing to us. Thus say Calvin, Hoadly, Owen, and others: whilst in their practice they have been, in this instance, like the servant who knew, but did not his lord's will. These good men have confessed rather too much for the credit of their practice, and our comfort while copying it. Many, however, have risen up, in defence of our fathers' practice and ours. They invent many ingenious hypotheses to prove it from heaven, but not one affords a solid conclusion which shows it to be so.

2. According to the light which for the present appears, we cannot but conclude that our definitions of baptism and to baptize are scriptural, accurate and just. If we will do the will of God, we must practise what he commands.

* Vol. II. p. 30, 1 Ed.

3. It appears that it is not left with us to chooſe what mode we will practiſe in adminiſtering or in receiving the ordinance of baptiſm; for we find but one mode to it: and we muſt practiſe this, or none. We may ſprinkle a perſon in the name of the Father, &c. and we may waſh the face, or any part of a perſon, in the ſame ſacred name; but it is not poſſible to baptize a perſon in this way; for ſprinkling, or any ſmall partial waſhing never was, is not now, nor ever will be, what the ſcriptures mean by Chriſtian baptiſm.

4. That a perſon muſt be greatly unacquainted with the plain, literal, ſcripture account of baptiſm; or extremely prejudiced, not to ſay perverſe, to affirm that the Bible ſays nothing about immerſion, or burying in water for baptizing. For it ſpeaks of this mode, and of no other, in the application of water as a goſpel ordinance.

The Baptiſts have for their mode the broad *baſis* of *ſcripture*, antiquity, and the uninterrupted, and ſomewhat univerſal practice of the church.

5. It appears that for well-informed Pedobaptiſts to oppoſe the Baptiſts, as to their mode of baptizing, is very great wickedneſs. For the Baptiſts have the advantage of plain and expreſs ſcripture on their ſide, and the learned, critical and candid Pedobaptiſts know it.

Ignorance is the beſt and only excuſe which we can make for ourſelves for any oppoſition which we have made againſt the ancient and primitive mode which the Baptiſts have practiſed in the adminiſtration of the ordinance. Our contention in this matter hath not been againſt the Baptiſts merely, but it hath been againſt their Lord and ours.

Dr. Lathrop appears generouſly to grant the truth, that immerſion is ſcripture baptiſm, and only contends that ſprinkling be alſo allowed; which every candid mind would readily do, were there one text of ſcripture to ſupport it.

6. No true Chriſtian, if he knew what he did, would ever make light of immerſion, which the Lord commands, and the Baptiſts practiſe, as the mode of baptizing, or, more ſtrictly, as baptiſm itſelf.

SERMON IV.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

WHILST diſcourſing to you upon theſe words, I have, as I ſuppoſe, proved to you what is the outward and viſible part of baptiſm. You have, to appearance, given a ſerious and ſolemn attention, and, I hope, a candid one, to what hath been ſaid.

All which I aſk of you in this matter is, that you in the ſpirit of meekneſs hear the whole, and then judge and practiſe in ſuch a manner as you cannot refuſe to do, without doing violence to your reaſon, and without diſobedience to the command of Heaven.

Some of you may be afraid of diſcord; but whence, I pray you, will diſcord ariſe among brethren? Will a candid, prayerful and ſelf-denying attention to truth cauſe this feared diſcord? Hath truth a tendency to produce diſcord among the faithful followers of the Lamb of God? I know that once, when Chriſt preached the doctrines of the croſs, multitudes of profeſſing diſciples went back, and followed no more with him. I hope it will not be thus with any of you. But, my brethren, however it may be with any of you, one thing is clear—I ought, I muſt declare to you, ſo faſt as I profitably can, all thoſe truths of God which appear neceſſary to build you up in ſound faith and holy practice.

As I have ſaid before, ſo ſay I unto you again, that all which I aſk of you is, to give truth a candid hearing, and yield your aſſent, when facts are plainly proved.

Nothing ſhould, by me, be thought too much to be done, to clear away from your minds the darkneſs of prejudice, together with any erroneous belief and practice which you may have imbibed, in part, by my means. I ſhall, therefore, in this diſcourſe, after having attended to the purport, end or deſign of baptiſm,

anſwer ſome objections, which may for the preſent obſtruct the force of truth.

Before we proceed to the particular buſineſs of this diſcourſe, you will, if you pleaſe, attend for a minute to a few queſtions, and their anſwers.

1. Is it not a plain caſe, that it is my duty to deliver to you the whole counſel of God, according to the beſt light it may pleaſe him to afford me?

2. Is it not equally plain, that your duty is to yield, not to me, but to the truths which I deliver, an obedient ear?

3. Should you, from an uncandid and prejudiced mind, refuſe to be converted by the truth, will the fault be mine?

4. Should I exhibit full evidence, as to the ſubject on hand, and exhibit that evidence clearly too, or ſhould it be that I have done this, and yet great difficulties ſhould ariſe, will you be juſtified ſhould you lay the blame to me?

5. Should I teach you the truth, and produce all the evidence which you can aſk for, and you ſhould, all, like faithful Chriſtians, believe it, where or whence will ariſe any difficulty among us? Should any of you refuſe to believe, will you charge your difficulties to my account?

6. Are not all of you determined that you will hear candidly, and believe upon evidence?

You will pleaſe to give a Chriſtian and judicious anſwer to each of theſe queſtions, and let your practice be conformed with the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Having laid before you the principal part of the facts and evidence, which I intended, as to the viſible and outward part of baptiſm, now—

Laſtly. The purport, end and deſign of the Baptiſmal Inſtitution may call for ſome attention.

The purport, end or deſign of this Chriſtian ordinance, or inſtitution, appears to be—

1. For a dividing line between the kingdom of our Lord, and the kingdoms of this world.

John was Chriſt's forerunner: he was ſent before his face to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the diſobedient to the wiſdom of the juſt: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord;* and that Chriſt ſhould be made manifeſt to Iſrael, therefore, ſays John, am I come baptizing with water.† John's miſſion comprehended a double purpoſe, to

* Luke i. 17. † John i. 31.

make ready a people, prepared for the Lord, and to manifeſt Him unto Iſrael. The people which he inſtrumentally made ready, and prepared to receive the Lord, he baptized; and it appears from his rejecting many of the Phariſees and Sadducees, that he intentionally baptized none other.* The whole diſcourſe which he had with them, *Matt.* iii. 7 to 12, is good evidence that he admitted none to baptiſm but ſuch as brought forth viſible fruits of repentance. Such perſons he admitted among that people which he was making ready for the Lord. This people were, when prepared, to compoſe that kingdom, or the beginning of that kingdom, which ſhall never be deſtroyed, and which is an everlaſting kingdom, which ſhall ſtand forever; *Daniel* ii. 44. and vii. 27. This kingdom Chriſt calls the kingdom of heaven, and ſays, it is not of this world.

It appears to be this kingdom, which was now at hand, almoſt ready to be ſet up, of which Chriſt ſpeaks to Nicodemus, when he ſays, *John* iii. 5. Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

All this does, for ſubſtance, meet the ſentiment of Baptiſts and Pedobaptiſts on this ſubject. Both ſuppoſe, that none can belong to this kingdom without being born of water, or baptized. Both ſuppoſe that men may profeſſedly, or viſibly, belong to this kingdom, without being born of the Spirit: but, perhaps, neither the Baptiſts, nor Pedobaptiſts, would ſay, that any do, ſtrictly ſpeaking, belong to this kingdom, except they have been born of water and of the Spirit. Our Lord ſaith, Verily, verily, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. If a man cannot enter into this kingdom but in this way, he cannot belong to it in any other.

Both ſides grant, that baptiſm, or to be born of water, is the only way of admittance into this kingdom. They are not ſo well agreed as to what it is to be born of water, whether it be to be ſprinkled, waſhed, or immerſed. Concerning this matter you muſt judge for yourſelves.

This being a given point, that the deſign of baptiſm is, that it ſhould be for a dividing line between that kingdom, which the God of heaven was to ſet up in the latter days, and this world, I would ſuggeſt for your conſideration—Which draws the line of ſeparation moſt clearly between this kingdom and all other kingdoms on earth; to enter it by being ſprinkled; or by be-

* Matt. iii. 7.

ing visibly and actually buried in water, and rising as it were from the dead, to join this kingdom?

I will also suggest one thing more for your consideration: Which hath the most direct and natural tendency to cause Christ's kingdom to appear to be, as it really is, not of this world? To have almost all admitted into it, in infancy, and so in unbelief, and all by sprinkling, or by a little water put upon the face, and the greater part of them living in open wickedness, or manifest unbelief, and unnoticed by the church to which they are supposed to belong; or, to have none admitted but professed believers, and these admitted in a way which significantly says, that they turn their backs upon the world; yea, that they are dead to the world, and are risen with Christ? I only suggest this for your consideration. I hope to attend to it in its place, but not to-day.

2. The purport, end or design of baptism appears to be for a manifestation, that the subjects of it have forsaken all, yes, their own lives, for Christ's sake and the gospel.

How can this be more visibly manifested, than by being buried with him in baptism? How can a man more visibly forsake all, than he does when buried? How can any one more manifestly forsake his own life for another, than by voluntarily submitting himself into the hands of another to be buried alive?

Is not this agreeable to what Christ saith, Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple?

3. It appears to be for a representation of our being washed from our sins in the blood of the Lamb.

John, the revelator, saith, speaking of Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." This is a figurative expression, showing at once the procuring cause, the blood of Christ, and the gracious effect, our souls purged from dead works to serve the living God. Can any natural sign represent this more fully, than does baptism, in which our bodies are washed with pure water?

4. The purport, end or design of this Christian ordinance appears to be for the promotion of piety in individuals, and purity in the church.

What can have a stronger tendency to move the heart of a Christian to piety and weanedness from the world, than has the institution of baptism? Seeing at every remembrance of it, he is put in mind, how Christ died *for sin*, and how every one who

hath believed and beeen baptized, has by the ordinance ſignally died *to ſin*, been buried from the world, and raiſed again to newneſs of life. Hath not this ordinance alſo an equally ſtrong tendency to preſerve the purity of the church, ſhould it be adminiſtered as we have proved it ought to be, by immerſion only? And ſhould another thing be found to be true, that viſible believers only ſhould be admitted to it, what a world of unbelievers would this ſhut out of the church! How differently would the profeſſed church of Jeſus Chriſt appear from what it now does!

If my information be correct, every natural-born ſubject of the crown of England is, according to the laws of their national church, to be baptized, and immediately conſidered as a member of the church. This is, indeed, conſiſtent, if all the parents have, in any paſt period, been proſelyted to the Chriſtian religion, and if baptiſm have come into the place of circumciſion, and to be adminiſtered to children and infants, as that was.

Not only ſo, but probably nine-tenths of the inhabitants of New-England, if not of our nation, belong to the church, according to the profeſſed belief of the Pedobaptiſts. Upon the ſame principle I preſume that more than three-fourths of all the adults in this and the neighbouring towns belong to the church, and have, if the principle be according to the goſpel, a right to require admittance to the Lord's Supper, and baptiſm for their children. Then, upon the ſame principle, would their children be members of the church, and entitled to all the privileges of God's houſe, as they come to years, and nothing ſhort of groſs immorality could juſtify their excluſion. Does this look as though Chriſt's kingdom were not of this world?

5. The purport, end or deſign of baptiſm appears to be well deſcribed by Dr. Goodwin, in the following words: "The eminent thing ſignified and repreſented in baptiſm is not ſingly the blood of Chriſt, as it *waſhes* us from our ſins, but there is a further repreſentation therein of Chriſt's death, burial and reſurrection, in the baptized: and this is not in a bare conformity to Chriſt, but is a repreſentation of a communion with Chriſt in his death and reſurrection; therefore it is ſaid, We are buried with him in baptiſm, and wherein we are riſen with him, &c. And moreover, here it is that the anſwer of a good conſcience, which is made the inward effect of this ordinance, 1 *Peter* iii. 21, is there alſo attributed to Chriſt's reſurrection, as the thing ſignified and repreſented in baptiſm; and as the cauſe

of that anſwer of a good conſcience, even baptiſm doth now ſave us, as it is a figure of ſalvation by Chriſt."

6. The purport, end or deſign of the ordinance appears to be to point out, or ſhadow forth, the forgiveneſs or remiſſion of ſins, and the being cleanſed from them. Hence the propriety of ſcripture expreſſions, which are like the following: The baptiſm of repentance for the remiſſion of ſins, *Mark* i. 4. Ariſe and be baptized, and waſh away thy ſins, *Acts* xxii. 16. Here it is worthy of the critical reader's notice, that the word tranſlated *waſh away*, is *apolouſai*, which ſignifies to waſh clean, or to waſh out a ſtain, as well as to waſh away. It is alſo worthy to be obſerved, that the word *louō*, whence this is derived, is the only word or theme, ſave *baptizō*, which, in the New-Teſtament, ſignifies to waſh the body. This being well conſidered, it cannot be doubted but baptiſm is a moſt ſignificant repreſentation of the remiſſion of ſin, or cleanſing from it.

Laſtly. The purport, end and deſign of the ordinance of baptiſm appears to be, for an open and manifeſt declaration that thoſe who receive it, do heartily, and of a ready mind, put on Chriſt, enter into his ſervice, receive him to be their Prophet, Prieſt and King, and covenant to be for him, and for him only. Accordingly it is ſaid, As many as were baptized into Chriſt, have put on Chriſt: They have put on his name, his ſelf denying profeſſion, his ſuffering, deſpiſed, but glorious cauſe.

Is the purport, end and deſign of baptiſm as hath been now ſtated? then the mode is immerſion; and thoſe who change the *ordinance* from *dipping* to *ſprinkling*, and apply it to unbelievers, *pervert* the *ordinance*, loſe its import, and make it quite another thing. This we have, for years, ignorantly done.

We will now attend to the arguments, which the late Rev. John Cleaveland hath left us in ſupport of *ſprinkling*, as being authentic baptiſm. This Mr. Cleaveland was, and I believe juſtly too, eſteemed as one of the moſt pious and faithful ſervants of Chriſt. Whilſt I was favoured with a perſonal acquaintance with him, he ſtood very high in my eſtimation, for his unaffected piety, and fervent ſimplicity, as a preacher of the everlaſting goſpel. I ſtill retain the ſame opinion of the good man. But great and good men are not always wiſe. In any inſtance where their wiſdom hath failed them, we ſhould be careful how we follow. The Bereans would not take Paul for a guide, without firſt bringing him to the ſtandard of divine truth. The Bereans were juſtified. Should we treat Mr. C. in the ſame way, he could not, and I am inclined to think, he

would not, though he were living, condemn us. I might let his works and arguments in support of sprinkling, sleep, were it not, that some of you, my people, and perhaps others, may by them, in one particular, be kept from beholding Christ, as in an open glass.

The good man's object was, to prove that baptism by sprinkling is authentic, or is scriptural; or that sprinkling is baptism.

I will now lay before you his supposed strong arguments by which he supports the validity of sprinkling for baptizing. After stating the principles of the Baptists, as to the ordinance now considering, his

1st. Argument is, "Their learned men know that the word *baptizō* in *Luke* xi. 38, and *baptismous* in *Mark* vii. 2—5, are used to signify the same as *niptō* is, i. e. proper washing, or making clean by the application of water, in cases that do not necessarily require dipping as the mode of washing." The answer to this is: That neither the learned men among the Baptists, nor the learned among any other class of men, know any such thing. Besides, *baptisthē*, in *Luke*, and *baptismous*, in *Mark*, have reference to, and mean, a ceremonial, a religious, or rather, as may be more properly called in these instances, a superstitious washing. What is meant by a ceremonial washing, you may see by looking into the ceremonial law: *Levit.* xi. 32, and in *Numb.* xix. 19, where you will find that this ceremonial washing was, to put into water, or to bathe one's flesh in water. You hence see that these two passages, with which Mr. Cleaveland lays the foundation of his support of sprinkling for baptism, utterly fail him, and come in as auxiliaries to confirm immersion as the only scripture baptism. I will not say that *niptō* is never used to signify ceremonial washing, and so intend the washing or putting the hands into water, (*pugmē*) with abundance of exactness, as Dr. Doddridge expounds it, or up to the elbows, as L'Enfant renders it. But one thing is evident to all who will examine the texts, and compare them with the ceremonial washings of the ceremonial law, in conformity with which the Jewish doctors meant to have their traditional ceremonies, that *baptizō* and *baptismos* are not used in the sense in which *niptō* generally is. In every point of view, Mr. Cleaveland's texts utterly fail him, and go to destroy the custom or tradition he brought them to support. Besides, I do not find that *baptizō* is used, in any place, for washing the hands, or for washing or dipping a part of the body, or any other thing. Mr. Cleaveland's

2d. Argument is built upon *Hebrews* ix. 10. where the

Apoſtle ſpeaks of *(diaphorois baptiſmois)* divers waſhings. Here, where the Apoſtle is ſpeaking of divers ceremonial waſhings, or bathings, Mr. Cleaveland, without the leaſt poſſible evidence, concludes the Apoſtle means divers ſprinklings.

The ſame anſwer which was given to the firſt argument belongs to this, as Mr. Cleaveland has produced no evidence, that *(baptiſmois)* waſhings, or bathings, means ſprinklings, ſave that in the 13th and 21ſt verſes. The Apoſtle makes uſe of the word ſprinkle, when ſpeaking of the application of blood, and ſpeaking of the unclean; he ſays, they are *rantized*, and adds, almoſt all things are by the law purged, *ratherized*, not *baptized*, with blood. It is not a little ſurpriſing that a man of Mr. Cleaveland's good ſenſe ſhould ſay, and that Dr. Lathrop, and other men of erudition, ſhould follow him, in ſaying, theſe different ſprinklings, in the 13th and 21ſt verſes, refer to *baptiſmois*, when, had they looked three words farther, they would have found them to be, *kai dikaiōmaſi ſarkos*, the liberal Engliſh of which is, "The ordinances of God concerning the ceremonial rites of bloody ſacrifices!" Had they looked into their Greek teſtaments, they might, with eaſe, have ſeen that their argument would not bear examination. Surely, had theſe gentlemen had the right of the queſtion, they never would have compelled the Apoſtle to explain by the ſprinkling of blood, what he meant by bathings or waſhings with water. Perhaps a more forced expoſition of ſcripture is ſeldom heard. Beſides, the Apoſtle told them, by placing what is tranſlated, carnal ordinances, between divers waſhings in the 10th, and ſprinklings in the 13th and 21ſt verſes, that he intended no ſuch thing as they ſuppoſed. If I miſtake not, Mr. C.'s

3d. Argument is an attempt to prove that *baptō* and *baptizō* are uſed to ſignify ſomething more than to dip, put into water, &c. When the good man brought forward his argument, he forgot—&c.—which belongs to his quotation from Dr. Gale, and which includes immerſion and overwhelming, and which compriſes the whole which Mr. C. has proved that *baptizō* ſignifies. But, waving his forgetfulneſs, we will attend to what he ſays. All which he appears to do here is, to ſhow that *baptō* or *baptizō* are uſed to waſh, dip and wet with ſprinkling the dew from heaven, and to overwhelm. That is, *baptō* ſignifies to dip, put into water, wet with the dew of heaven, &c. and *baptizō* ſignifies to dip, put into water and overwhelm. What is the conſequence? According to Mr. C. it is this: Becauſe *baptō* is ſometimes uſed to ſignify one's being wet with the

diſtilling dew of heaven, &c. therefore *baptizō* ſignifies the ſame thing: Becauſe *baptō* ſignifies in one place to waſh without dipping, therefore *baptizō* ſignifies to waſh without dipping; and becauſe *baptō* is ſometimes uſed to ſignify to colour, or ſtain, by aſperſion, or the like, therefore *baptizō* is uſed in the ſame ſenſe; therefore ſprinkling is authentic baptiſm. What evidence, I pray you, my hearers, is there in all this? Yes, what ſhow or appearance of evidence is there in all this? Would ten thouſand ſuch arguments afford you the leaſt conviction, or gain your aſſent, where you had a cent to loſe?

Every perſon of ſenſe, who is acquainted with the Greek, would, generally ſpeaking, allow Mr. C.'s premiſes, that *baptō*, in different places, ſignifies the application of water in different ways; and that *baptizō* ſometimes ſignifies overwhelming. But no perſon, who underſtands the matter, will allow his concluſion, for it hath no connexion with the premiſes.

His argument, in plain Engliſh, is this: The verb to wet, ſometimes ſignifies to ſprinkle, as in a heavy dew we ſay it ſprinkles, or wets; the verb to overwhelm, ſometimes ſignifies to cover all over with water, as is the beach, by the flowing of the tide. Of conſequence, to overwhelm is to ſprinkle; therefore to ſprinkle is authentic overwhelming, or baptiſm. The fallacy of this argument is eaſily detected, and with the ſame eaſe may any one, who knows the different ſignifications of *baptō* and *baptizō*, uncover the fallacy and complete inconcluſiveneſs of Mr. C.'s argument.

The plain truth is, he hath done his ſide a diſſervice; for by ſearching he hath found, and implicitly acknowledges, though not intentionally, and (I ſuppoſe) without knowing it, that no inſtance can be found where *baptizō* ſignifieth the application of water by ſprinkling, or any other way, which does not imply overwhelming, or waſhing, that is, a ceremonial waſhing, which is bathing, or putting into water. But—

4. There is another argument upon which Mr. Cleaveland chiefly dwells, and upon which he appears greatly to reſt the defence of his whole cauſe. It is his ſtrong hold againſt immerſion, and for ſprinkling; and it is this: Baptiſm with water, or baptiſm as a Chriſtian ordinance, is to ſignify Chriſt's baptizing with the Holy Ghoſt. I have no where found that he hath proved that this is the great and principal thing which baptiſm ſignifies; nor do I by any means obtain conviction that the mode of baptizing is to be determined, with certainty, from this particular thing, even ſhould it be granted that one impor-

tant design of baptism is to signify Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. But, as Mr. C. seems to depend upon the strength of this argument more than he does upon the strength of any other, we will grant for the present, that baptism with water was appointed particularly, if not mainly, to set forth the mode in which Christ baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

Now the great question is, In what manner or mode, by sprinkling or overwhelming, did Christ Jesus baptize with the Holy Ghost? Mr. C. in his treatise, replies abundantly, By sprinkling, certainly. We will put this subject to the test, by instancing the most remarkable season which ever was, in which Christ, in a most remarkable, public and astonishing degree was baptizing with the Holy Ghost. I presume were Mr. C. now alive, he could not, with any face of propriety, object against taking a sample for the whole, the most remarkable instance which ever hath been, and perhaps which ever will be exhibited of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. I am willing to submit the strong argument of Mr. C. to this great sample of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. Are not all you, my hearers, willing to leave the weight of his argument to such a decision? I am persuaded you all say, Yes.

We will then bring his argument to the proposed test.

The instance which we will take, (for surely it is the most astonishing one,) is that which Christ foretold, as related, Acts i. 5. "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." The accomplishment of this prediction and promise we have related in the four first verses of the next chapter. It is thus: When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there was a sound from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

Here was truly a wonderful instance of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost.

Here, 1. All the house was filled with the sound, wind or Spirit from heaven. 2. Cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 3. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

We here see that they were all overwhelmed; for all the house, where they were sitting, was filled; and not only were they all overwhelmed, but they were also filled.

It is left with you to determine, what becomes of Mr. C.'s argument, upon which he lays so much stress, and of which he speaks with so much confidence, and not unfrequently with an air of triumph. Is there a word about sprinkling in any part of it? or is there any thing which looks like it? Does it not look considerably like immersion, or overwhelming? At least, does it not favour immersion, or overwhelming, as much as it does sprinkling? If so, then it proves nothing for sprinkling. It is left with you to determine which side it favours.

It is possible, however, that some of you may suppose, that Mr. C. might intend *that* baptism, if it may be so called, which the Holy Ghost ministers, when it creates the soul anew. To this supposition, I will just observe, "The wind bloweth (saith Christ) where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell *whence* it *cometh* or *whither* it *goeth*; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Would it not be extreme folly to suppose that water baptism represents the *operations* of the Spirit, when none can know whence it cometh, or whither it goeth? It may represent the effect of the Spirit's operations; and it is called, a being born, not sprinkled, of the Spirit.

5. In reading Mr. C.'s defence of sprinkling, as being authentic baptism, I noticed but one more distinct argument, and it is this:

"*Niptō*, *baptizō*, *louō*, *brechō*, *plunō*, or *apoplunō*, all signify to wash." The conclusion which he draws from this is, in short, the following: To baptize is not to immerse, but to sprinkle. I see no connexion between his premises and conclusion. Besides, Mr. C. tells us, page 80, that the Jews, by adhering to the tradition of the elders, observed the washing of hands, and divers other things, as a religious ceremony. Now, if all the words which Mr. C. mentions, signify to wash, and yet some of them signify common washing, and another, and that *baptizō*, signifies ceremonial washing, and that be to put into water, as is the case, what does his argument prove? It proves just nothing to his point. Had he proved, what he hath not even attempted, that they all signify the same kind of washing, and that the washing signified was not immersion, but sprinkling only, then his conclusion would have followed, that sprinkling is baptism.

If the above arguments will not support Mr. Cleaveland's theory, it must all come down; for they are the substance, if not all the arguments, which he hath adduced, and I presume better cannot be found.

I thought to have taken Dr. Lathrop's arguments upon the same subject, into consideration; but upon re-examining them I find there is no material dissimilarity between his and Mr. C.'s; they therefore both stand or fall together. A word or two may be here added.

Dr. Lathrop assures us that Cyprian, who wrote within about one hundred and fifty years of the apostles, speaking of sprinkling, says, "In the sacrament of salvation (that is, baptism) when *necessity compels*, the shortest ways of transacting divine matters do, by God's grace, confer the whole benefit." The Doctor adds, "The ancients *practised immersion*."*

By this quotation of the Doctor's from Cyprian, and confession of his own, being put together, it appears at once that all his preceding arguments are erroneous; for Cyprian does not intimate that sprinkling was from heaven, but says it was from necessity. Besides, his calling baptism the sacrament of salvation, shows us the error, whence the necessity of sprinkling came, namely, a belief that the ordinance of baptism was necessary to salvation. This being the case, and it also being true, as the Doctor acknowedges, that the ancients practised immersion, save when necessity compelled, as they erroneously supposed, the consequence is fairly this, that immersion is from heaven, the ancients being judges; and that sprinkling is from men, from necessity, or rather from error.

I thought to have added no more upon the Doctor's mode of Christian baptism. However, one argument ought to be taken out of his hands, lest it misguide some of his readers. He tells us, that *baptizō*, in Mark vii. and Luke xi. is used to signify the application of water to the hands. The only answer needed is, It is not thus said, in Mark, or Luke, or in any other part of the Bible. When the Doctor shall re-examine the passages, he will probably see the mistake.

Will gentlemen, and Christians too, forever contend against *immersion*, the institution of heaven, and for *sprinkling*, which hath nothing but *error* and *convenience* for its support!

* Pages 24, 25.

SERMON V.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

I HAVE confidence in you, brethren, that ye will keep the ordinances, as I ſhall deliver them to you, and prove them to be from the word of the Lord.

One thing I would ſtill know of you, my brethren, whether you, like the more noble Bereans, will receive the word with readineſs, ſearching the ſcriptures daily, that you may know the truth of what you hear.

You will bear in mind, that whoſoever loveth father or mother, houſe or lands, wife or children, more than Chriſt, is not worthy of him. If, through affection for any of theſe, you ſhould refuſe to obey Chriſt, it will be too evident that you love them more than you do him, and ſo are not worthy of him.

Should you love any erroneous belief and practice more than you do the truths of Chriſt, you will, ſo far as you manifeſt it, prove that you are not worthy of him.

Should you deſpiſe me for delivering and vindicating the truths of Chriſt to you, you will at the ſame time deſpiſe him. You will therefore give good heed to what you ſay, and to what you do in this matter; for if it be of God, it will ſtand, and none can overthrow it. It is hoped none of you will be found fighting againſt God.

This diſcourſe may contain a review of what we have paſſed over, together with ſome application. In my firſt diſcourſe to you on the ſubject, which we have ſtill before us, the following are the principal things to which we attended.

I. I propoſed a number of plain truths, conſidered to be as firſt principles, for your attention.

1. Baptiſm is a poſitive inſtitution, about which we can know nothing, as to its being a Chriſtian ordinance, but from what Chriſt, and thoſe inſpired by his Spirit, have taught us.

2. All which we are required to believe and practiſe, with

reſpect to the Chriſtian ordinance of baptiſm, is declared to us by Jeſus Chriſt, and by his forerunner and apoſtles.

3. When Jeſus Chriſt firſt inſtituted the ordinance of baptiſm, he no doubt delivered his mind ſo clearly and fully upon the ſubject, that his diſciples and immediate followers underſtood and practiſed as he would have them.

4. Every thing which hath, by the precepts and commandments of men, been added ſince, is aſide from the ordinance, and makes no part of it.

5. No man, nor body of men, hath any more authority to add to or diminiſh from this ordinance, than they have to inſtitute a new one and call it Chriſt's.

6. Whenever, and wherever, the ordinance of baptiſm is ſo changed as to loſe the intent of the inſtitution, then and there the ordinance is loſt, and becomes no Chriſtian ordinance at all.

II. I defined for your information a number of words which appertain to the ordinance of baptiſm.

We found all theſe to be juſt as we might expect to have found them, provided immerſion be baptiſm, or the mode in which it is adminiſtered.

Baptiſterion, a place in which to waſh the body. *Baptiſm*, immerſion, or dipping one all over in water. *Baptizō* ſignifies to dip, or waſh, the body all over in water. *Louō* (a word ſeveral times uſed in reference to, or ſignifying the ſame, as baptiſm) is, to waſh, to rinſe, to bathe, &c. Then,

III. I ſet before you all the texts in the New-Teſtament which relate either to the baptiſm of John, or to that of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. In the next place, I propoſed for your meditation the paſſages of ſcripture where waſhing is mentioned, and the Greek words which are uſed. I then called your attention to thoſe paſſages in which ſprinkling is mentioned, and to the Greek words which are made uſe of. *Laſtly*, I read to you thoſe ſcriptures where to dip is mentioned, and alſo the Greek words which are rendered to dip.

In not one of the places, where the ordinance of baptiſm is brought to view do we find one word about ſprinkling, or any thing which looks like it. In every place where to dip is mentioned, we find a near relation to baptiſm; every word which is uſed, coming from the ſame *root* or theme, from which *baptizō* comes.

As to the word *waſh*, we find no relation between the words which ſignify to waſh, and thoſe which ſignify to baptize, ſave in thoſe few inſtances where the meaning is to waſh the body,

or put into water, or wash a thing all over. When we come to the Greek words which signify to sprinkle, we find no similarity, or likeness, between them and the word to baptize.

In all the places where baptizing is mentioned, not a word is used which looks like sprinkling; where sprinkling is mentioned, there is not a word used which appears like baptism.

In my next discourse, I produced my evidence, that my definitions of baptism and to baptize were accurate and just. I dwelt largely upon this evidence, for the merit of the whole subject depends greatly, if not entirely, upon the determinate meaning of the words, which our Lord used in the institution of the ordinance, and when speaking of it. When we know the determinate signification of his words, we know what he says, and what we ought to understand by the words which he uses. The evidence which I produced, was, in short, the following:

1. The Greek Lexicon, Butterworth's Concordance, Bailey's and Entick's Dictionaries, bear their united testimony, that the plain, literal, and common, if not universal, signification of the words *baptism* and *to baptize*, is immersion and to immerse, bury in water, to dip, or to plunge a person all over in water. Here are four learned and positive witnesses to the same thing. Indeed, they give no other signification, save it be to wash, which we have seen intends a ceremonial washing, which is to put into water, or to bathe.

2. I repeated some of the attendant or circumstantial facts, which have relation to the ordinance of baptism. John baptized IN the river Jordan. He was baptizing in Enon near to Salim, because there was *much water* there. The word *baptistery* signifies a place in which to wash the body all over. *Baptism* signifies to dip, to plunge, immerse, or to wash the body all over in water. *Baptizer* signifies one which dips, plunges, or washes the body all over in water. *To baptize* signifies to immerse, plunge under water, or under any other liquid thing, or to dip, or to put into water. To be *baptized* is to be plunged, immersed, or washed all over in water.

These things being true, is it not easy to determine what the ordinance of baptism signifies?

3. The words *baptismos* and *baptizō* have two, and only two, translations in the New-Testament. These two are *baptism* and *washing*. Where their meaning is washing, or where they are thus translated, it is a ceremonial washing, which is to put into water, or bathe the flesh in water, as you may see, *Levit.* xi.

32. *Numb.* xix. 19. When they are tranſlated *baptiſm*, or to *baptize*, the thing intended is the baptiſm of water, of fire, of ſufferings, or of the Holy Ghoſt.

4. I brought forward ſeveral noted witneſſes, to bear their united teſtimony, that I had given a juſt definition of the word *baptizō* : theſe were, John Calvin, Zanchius, and Dr. Owen.

In the next place I mentioned to you that Paul repeatedly uſes the word *louō*, where he means the ſame things as where he uſes the word *baptizō ;* that he uſes theſe words as ſignifying the ſame thing. Whereas, *louō* ſignifies to waſh and to bathe the body in water, and conſequently *baptizō* means the ſame.

Laſtly. I brought forward Paul's expoſition of the word *baptiſm*, and ſhowed you, that he expounds it, as being buried with Chriſt in baptiſm, or immerſion.

In my diſcourſe, which I next preached to you, I produced evidence, that the apoſtles and primitive Chriſtians, not only underſtood the matter as I have deſcribed it, but practiſed accordingly.

In ſupport of the apoſtle's practice, I obſerved, that the word *louō*, of determinate ſignification, which they uſed to ſignify their practice, or what was done by them in baptiſm, determines or fixes their practice to be immerſion. I farther obſerved, that they were commanded to practiſe baptiſm, or to baptize, as I have deſcribed it ; and that the ſcriptures teſtify, that they thus did ; and alſo that the apoſtles ſay, the mode of baptizing in their day was, by burying the ſubjects in baptiſm.

For witneſſes that the primitive church practiſed immerſion, we have Moſheim, Bailey, Calvin, Baxter, and many others, all agreeing in this one point, that the mode of baptizing, or baptiſm itſelf, among the ancients, was immerſion. We have alſo evidence that the church thus practiſed, for thirteen hundred years, ſome extreme caſes excepted. Moreover we have evidence that all the church, in Europe, in Aſia, and in Africa, ſave that part of it, which is now, or hath been, under the bewildering power of the popes, do now, and ever have, practiſed immerſion.

Beſides all this, the very reaſons which the Pedobaptiſts aſſign, why they have laid aſide immerſion, ſhow that ſprinkling is not commanded by the Lord, but is taught by the precepts of men.

You ſee we have an ocean of witneſſes and evidence againſt us; and all, or nighly ſo, from our own denomination of

Chriſtians. What a world of evidence might we reaſonably expect that the Baptiſts would be able to bring for themſelves, and againſt us and our practice, would we hear them, when our own ſide bring ſo much againſt their own practice and for the Baptiſts! Beſides, this evidence appears to ſtand in its full force againſt us, there being no oppoſite evidence to weaken its force. Indeed we are, in this matter, much like criminals, who plead, at leaſt the leaders of them, guilty to the whole indictment. However, ſome have made a full plea of, not guilty but in part. At the ſame time, numbers of them, in their plea, have convicted themſelves of being guilty throughout.

In the laſt diſcourſe, after holding to your view the purport, end and deſign of baptiſm, I examined one of their pleas of, not guilty. But what evidence did the the good man give of his innocence? Can the largeſt ſtretch of charity allow more than this, *he knew not what he did?* Was truth ever brought to ſuch ſtraits as to require to be ſupported by ſuch arguments?

APPLICATION.

FROM a review of the whole ſubject, the following appear to flow as neceſſary conſequences.

1. Whether we allow immerſion to be the ſcripture mode of baptiſm, and the only one which it requires, or not; one thing is clear, that we have as much evidence of its being ſo, as we could have, on ſuppoſition that it were.

The ſcriptures declare, in various ways, that this is the mode, and mention no other. The ſcriptures expound themſelves to mean immerſion, or burying.

We find not a ſingle trace, in all the ſcriptures, where the ordinance is ſpoken of, of any thing ſhort of immerſion being mentioned.

Good men, who are ſkilful in the true import of words, have agreed, that the plain, literal and accurate meaning of the word, to baptize, is to immerſe or bury in water, &c. Nor have any been able to ſhow that in any part of God's word it hath any oppoſite meaning or application.

The church of Jeſus Chriſt have, in all ages, underſtood the matter of baptiſm as I have explained it. We muſt, however, except for the laſt three or five hundred years, many of thoſe branches of the church, which have been, or are now, under the juriſdiction of the church of Rome. The purport, end and deſign of baptiſm alſo intimate to us, that this is the manner of baptizing.

Indeed, if there be any words in the Greek language by which the Lord of the Baptiſmal Inſtitution could have told us what he intended, the words uſed do this. For there are no two words in the language, or, at leaſt, none which have come to our knowledge, which ſo literally, ſo uniformly, and ſo expreſsly, ſignify to immerſe, or waſh, or bathe the body in water, as do the words *baptizō* and *louō*. Hence, if immerſion be baptiſm, the Lord, if I may ſo ſay, could not have told us of it in the New Teſtament, if the words, choſen by the Holy Ghoſt, do not afford this information. If baptiſm be immerſion, then the two moſt ſuitable words have been choſen to expreſs it; but if ſprinkling be baptiſm, two words which were farther from the point could not have been found. We find no inſtance, in the Bible, where they are thus uſed. In ſhort, no two words, which mention the application of water in any way, are farther from the idea of ſprinkling, than are thoſe two which are uſed when baptiſm is intended. It therefore appears, that whilſt we have uſed ſprinkling for baptiſm, we have departed from the plain and primitive import of the words uſed, as far as we could without a complete omiſſion of water. None can be at a farther remove from the inſtituted, ſcripture baptiſm, than we have been, without denying it in whole.

2. Error is very inſinuating and deceiving. Surely it hath proved thus in the ſubject of ſprinkling.

Cyprian, who wrote within about a hundred and fifty years of the apoſtles, ſpeaking of ſprinkling, ſays, as quoted by Dr. Lathrop, "In the ſacrament of *ſalvation*, (i. e. baptiſm) when *neceſſity compels*, the ſhorteſt ways of tranſacting divine matters, do, by God's grace, confer the whole benefit." Here we ſee the origin of ſprinkling for baptiſm.

It was an early error in the church, that baptiſm was neceſſary to ſalvation. Hence, when it was judged, that life would be endangered by immerſion, the perſon muſt either loſe his life by baptiſm, or loſe his ſoul for want of being baptized, or ſome other mode muſt be invented. Or, if the ſick perſon was nighly dying, he muſt be baptized without immerſion, or probably loſe his ſoul, before he could be conveyed where the ordinance might be adminiſtered. Under theſe circumſtances, man's fruitful invention deviſed ſprinkling as a ſubſtitute for baptiſm. Here is the origin of ſprinkling, as the ancients have told us.

In proceſs of time, ſound ladies and gentlewomen wiſhed to have ſprinkling ſubſtituted for baptiſm in their behalf; after-

wards others, till at laſt, it became a general cuſtom in many of the European nations. In the mean time, the Baptiſts, and many others, objected againſt the practice, as being contrary from the command of Chriſt. Hence aroſe the neceſſity of defending it, or elſe having it conſidered as a departure from the faith. Matters being thus, the invention of many was in full exerciſe to defend ſprinkling, as being of divine origin. A number of ceremonial rites of the Levitical law were preſſed into this ſervice; ſeveral paſſages of the New-Teſtament were wreſted from their natural meaning to a forced interpretation; and out of the motley mixture were formed what were ſtyled *arguments;* but ſuch arguments can ſtand no longer than while prejudice lives to ſupport them.

However, the moſt diſagreeable part is, a good number of very pious and learned men have been carried away in this whirlpool of deception. Their being deceived has deceived others; and we are, or have been, among the deceived.

3. Sprinkling is not from heaven, but of men. This too, if I miſtake not, by the fully and fairly implied conceſſion of thoſe, who have written in its defence.

If from heaven, why, in the firſt place, uſe it only when neceſſity compelled! as was ſuppoſed to ſave ſouls from hell? If from heaven, why, afterwards, uſe it only in caſes of leſs urgent neceſſity? If from heaven, why bring in the coldneſs of the country as an excuſe for uſing it? If from heaven, why not mentioned in the inſtitution of the ordinance, or in ſome paſſage where mention is made of baptiſm, or in ſome other place in all the writings of the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles? If from heaven, why not intimated as being ſo, by thoſe who firſt introduced it? If ſprinkling be from heaven, why ſo many *inconcluſive* arguments in its ſupport? Is the word of God deficient in this particular, and hath it revealed what cannot be ſupported by it? If from heaven, why not commanded, enjoined, required, or ſo much as once hinted, as being a mode of a goſpel ordinance, in any part of that revelation which we have received from heaven?

4. Another conſequence is, That the ſcripture mode of baptiſm is immerſion, and for aught we know, the only mode, and neceſſary to the adminiſtration of the ordinance.

This is the plain, literal, ſcripture ſenſe of baptiſm; therefore this is the plain, literal, ſcripture mode. The ſcriptures mention no other mode; therefore this may be, and is, for aught appears, the only ſcripture mode.

5. From what we have gone over, one thing appears certain: That Chriſt never commanded any of his followers to adminiſter any goſpel ordinance by ſprinkling, and, at the ſame time, to ſay, *I baptize.* For to do thus, would be to command them to do *one thing*, and to ſay that they did *another*.

To *ſprinkle* is to *rantize*, which hath no viſible connexion with baptiſm. To ſay, Chriſt commanded his diſciples to rantize, and, at the ſame time, to ſay, We baptize, is what no Chriſtian would, knowingly, be willing to ſay. This would, if I miſtake not, be making Chriſt the miniſter of ſin. But what I have long, implicitly, though ignorantly, done, others may ſtill do.

6. Another conſequence is, cuſtom hath great influence upon the human mind. It ſurely hath upon us. For, even after we have full evidence that ſprinkling, for baptiſm, is not from heaven, but was the offſpring of error, and foſtered by the dark ages of Papiſtical uſurpation, we are hardly perſuaded to renounce it. But, my brethren, my expectation is, that after you have ſearched your Bibles through and through, and find nothing of it there, you will give it up.

Should the Lord inquire of us, why we ſubſtitute ſprinkling for baptizing, and ſay unto us, Whence is this ſubſtitution, from heaven, or of men? Would there not be great reaſonings among us what anſwer to return? Should we ſay, From heaven; he might reply, How do you prove it? Should we ſay, Of men, then might he aſk, Why do you practiſe it?

7. Another conſequence is, we have the ſame kind of evidence, and perhaps more of it, that baptiſm is to be adminiſtered by immerſion, or dipping, or putting into water, than we have to ſupport any other goſpel precept, or practice. The evidence which we have, in either caſe, is the ſignification of the words which are uſed to point out the thing to be believed, or practiſed.

Were it not for the influence of habit, or cuſtom, you would as readily and naturally conclude, from the very words uſed, that immerſion, or dipping, or waſhing the body in water, was the meaning of baptiſm, as that a religious eating of bread, and drinking of wine, in commemoration of our dying Lord, was the way to obſerve the Lord's ſupper.

8. We appear to be brought to this dilemma: We muſt either embrace the tradition of the elders, for the rule of one part of our practice; or we muſt no more ſprinkle and call it baptiſm.

9. Another conſequence is, Thoſe, who firſt introduced

ſprinkling for baptizing, had no more right ſo to do, than they had to inſtitute a new rite, or ordinance, and call it Chriſt's.

What authority have we to follow their erroneous and hurtful practice?

10. We have another conſequence worthy of conſideration, and it is this: The Chriſtian ordinance of baptiſm is a moſt ſolemn and ſignificant ordinance, and of very high importance. I ſpeak not of the viſible, or actual adminiſtration of it, in particular; for I never ſaw it adminiſtered, as Chriſt hath delivered it to his people: But I refer to the purport, end and deſign of it. It is, among many other things, the great dividing line, which Heaven hath appointed to be drawn between the viſible kingdom of Immanuel, and the men of this world. Doubtleſs there are a large number who belong to Chriſt's inviſible kingdom, who are not, ſtrictly ſpeaking, or regularly, in his kingdom viſibly, having not ſubmitted to this ordinance, which is the great and important line of diſtinction.

11. It appears that we are, truly, in a trying ſtate. We muſt depart, in one inſtance, from a long habit, or continue to do as we have done, and yet not be able to vindicate, by the ſcriptures of truth, our own conduct.

Laſtly. We come, at length, to the anſwer of this old and difficult and perplexing queſtion: Where, and when, did the religious ſect called Baptiſts, ariſe? The anſwer is, plainly, this: They aroſe in Judea, at the time when John came, preaching in the wilderneſs the baptiſm of repentance. I mention this conſequence with conſiderable aſſurance, becauſe the New-Teſtament abundantly favours it, and no man is able to contradict me. Should any attempt it, he will fail for want of evidence. I ſhould, not long ſince, have been gratified, could I have found their origin any where in the dark ages of Popery, or at the commencement of the reformation, among the famous enthuſiaſts of Germany, Holland, Switzerland, or Weſtphalia. But, after having long purſued the perplexing reſearch, I found their *origin*, where I leaſt of all expected it, in Enon and Jordan.

A few queſtions are now to cloſe the preſent ſubject.

1. Is not immerſion the ſcripture baptiſm?

2. Is ſprinkling a mode of baptizing warranted by ſcripture? If ſo, where?

3. Are Old-Teſtament rites to explain New-Teſtament ordinances? Is Moſes to correct what Chriſt hath left incomplete? Is it ſo?

4. Will Chriſt approve of that practice of men, which ſo changes his poſitive inſtitution, as to loſe, greatly to loſe, the purport, end and deſign of it?

5. Was it ever right, and is it now, for men to change what Chriſt hath commanded to be in perpetual obſervation? Did the ſuppoſed *extreme caſes* juſtify this change at firſt, and will trifling inconveniences juſtify us now?

6. Will it be wiſe and ſafe for us continually to forſake the commandment of Chriſt for the precepts of men?

7. Do you, my brethren, or can you, blame me for wiſhing you to keep the ordinances of Chriſt as he hath delivered them to the ſaints?

8. Should I have manifeſted myſelf your friend, or Chriſt's, if, after having found ſuch a precious, new and old *treaſure* in his word, as is the Chriſtian ordinance of baptiſm, I had not ventured my life, or in other words, my reputation, my eaſe, my property, and my every worldly conſideration, to bring it forth to your view and acceptance, that you might more fully walk in all the ſtatutes and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs?

One requeſt, my brethren, I pray you to grant me, and it is this: Search the ſcriptures devoutly, and follow me ſo far as I follow Jeſus Chriſt, your Lord and mine.

SERMON VI.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

I HAVE already obſerved to you that Chriſt Jeſus, the Head of the church, and Lord of all, was now conſtituting his preſent and ſucceeding diſciples to be apoſtles unto all nations. My text is their commiſſion, and general and particular orders. In it they are directed—

I. To go and diſciple all nations.

II. To baptize them in the name of the Father, &c.

III. He directs these newly constituted apostles, and all their successors, to teach their baptized disciples to observe all things whatsoever he had given in commandment.

Lastly. For their encouragement and comfort, he adds, And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

What I purposed to say to you, particularly, upon the second proposition, I have said. I now recur to the

I. Which contains Christ's command to *his disciples* to go and *disciple* all nations.

I have already showed you what baptism is, and the design of it. I am now, if the Lord will, to lay open what is commanded to be done before baptism be administered, also the evidence which the Lord may afford me to prove to you that my instruction is of him.

Your feelings, my brethren and people, have no doubt been highly wrought up, whilst I have opened before you one of the laws of Christ's kingdom amongst men. I have still more things to say unto you respecting the rules and regulations of this kingdom. I pray the Lord, that your minds may be so prepared to hear, that you may not forsake me and flee, as many of Christ's professed friends did, when he preached on a subject which greatly crossed their prejudices and carnal expectations.

Your busy minds, no doubt, will, before you are aware, be inquiring what great and good men, in our days and in the days of our fathers, have said and thought of these things; but we should look farther back than to our forefathers. The man Christ Jesus, and his inspired prophets and apostles, should be the men of our counsel. Should I speak according to these, you may hearken to me with safety: if contrary, convict me by the word and testimony of Jesus Christ; for I appeal to these, for by them I ought to be judged.

One request, my hearers, I pray you to grant me; namely —Lay prejudice aside, and let scripture, reason and common sense be heard for a few minutes.

Surely you must consider my case more trying than any of yours. For it is, perhaps, as difficult for me to combat my own prejudices and carnal feelings, as it is for any of you to contend with his: Besides this, I have to look your prejudices in the face, while I venture to bring any of your old practices to the scriptures for trial. Yes, more than all this, I have many trials to encounter, which you have not, nor can have.

I should not have made the attempt to bring our former practice to the standard for trial, had not my difficulties been so great, that I durst proceed no farther, without proving my works. One of my practices hath been weighed in the balance, and is found wanting. I am now, if my heart deceive me not, willing to lead another of my works, or the subjects on which some of my works have been, to the bar for trial. If this shall be found of wood, hay or stubble, may the fire of truth burn it up, and may the fire of love cause me to rejoice while it shall be consuming.

The proposition which will bring this other of my works to the trial, is—

Christ commands his ministers to go and disciple all nations. I have engaged to be one of these ministers. The command is, therefore, binding upon me. I have gone forth, that I might obey. The great thing to be determined is, whether I have understood what it is to disciple, or to make disciples, and have practised accordingly.

The important question to be decided is just this: If I disciple any of you who are parents, do I, as a necessary consequence, disciple all your children and households?

The only difficulty, in this question, relates to children and households. What it is to disciple the master of a family, is a thing in which Christians generally agree.

I ought just to remark to you, that *matheteusate*, to teach, is, in its literal and genuine sense, to disciple, or so to teach as to make disciples.

To bring the question before you as fully as I can, I wish you, each one of you, to fix his attention upon some one family in this town, in which family not a Christian is to be found. If each one have his mind fixed upon such a Christless household, I will now put the question:—

Suppose I, instrumentally, disciple the father of this family, do I, as a certain consequence, make disciples of the whole family?

Before you determine the question, it may be well to fix in your minds what a disciple is. Let the scriptures speak. The *disciples* were called Christians first at Antioch, Acts xi. 26. The commission which Christ gave to the first ministers, and to all succeeding ones, as recorded Mark xvi. 15, 16, is, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that *believeth*, &c. Here a believer is the same as a *disciple*. Here we see a disciple, in the sense of my text, is a believer, a

believer in Chriſt, a Chriſtian. This is the idea which the New-Teſtament, from beginning to end, gives us of a diſciple. There is, however, mention made of diſciples, who were ſo but by profeſſion, or who were viſible diſciples only; not having the love of God in them.

Now try the queſtion with reſpect to both ſorts of theſe diſciples.

Suppoſe I, inſtrumentally, diſciple the father of a Chriſtleſs family, do I, as a neceſſary conſequence, make Chriſtians of all in his houſe? You will pleaſe to make up your minds, on this queſtion, decidedly.

Suppoſe again, that I, inſtrumentally, diſciple the father of a Chriſtleſs family, do I, as a neceſſary conſequence, make *viſible* diſciples of all his family? Let your minds be clearly determined as to the anſwer.

Once more; ſuppoſe I, by delivering the Lord's meſſage, convert, or make a diſciple of the father of a Chriſtleſs family, do I, of neceſſary conſequence, make any one of his houſehold beſides himſelf a diſciple?*

Let ſcripture, let reaſon, let common ſenſe, let any thing ſpeak, which will ſpeak the truth, and determine theſe queſtions. Conſider, take advice, and ſpeak your minds.

Can you ſuppoſe, or can you not, that to make a father of a family a diſciple, his wife, his ſervants, and his children, are all diſciples of courſe, or of neceſſary conſequence?

Is not this a clear caſe? and yet the great and momentous ſubject before us turns altogether upon the anſwer of this queſtion.

If diſcipling the father of a family renders all his houſe diſciples, they are all ſubjects of baptiſm, they have the ſcripture qualification for it; if it do not, then they have not the qualification which my text requires to be in thoſe who are baptized.

You will judge for yourſelves whether houſeholds do thus become diſciples; as for the reſt, the ſcriptures determine: if they be diſciples, they are to be baptized; if not, they are not to be.

I know what your anſwer muſt be, for by inconteſtable facts, in this town, the diſcipling of a father of a family does not diſciple his houſehold; it does not even make them viſible diſciples, or give them even the appearance of being ſo.

* Prejudice may reply, You are to diſciple the houſehold by baptizing them. This contradicts my text, that ſays, diſciple them firſt.

The following is for evidence, that perſons muſt be made diſciples before they are baptized.

1. John made his hearers diſciples before he baptized them. He required, in order for baptiſm, that they ſhould bring forth fruits meet for, or as evidence of, repentance, Matt. iii. 8. and Luke iii. 8.

2. Chriſt's diſciples baptized none but ſuch as were made diſciples firſt, John iv. 1, 2.

3. Chriſt, in my text, gives no liberty to baptize any but ſuch as are firſt diſcipled. Yes, he commands his miniſters to diſciple before they baptize.

The account which Mark gives us of the Apoſtles' commiſſion, and of the Baptiſmal Inſtitution, is confirming evidence in this matter, xvith chapter, 15th and 16th verſes: 'Preach the goſpel to every creature: He that believeth, and is baptized,' &c. Here believing is put before baptiſm. The way adopted by ſome to avoid the force of this text is, if they be baptized, ſay they, no matter when, before or after believing. This way of getting clear of the difficulty appears neither wiſe nor candid; for it injures the plain meaning of the text, and makes Matthew's and Mark's account of the commiſſion to diſagree.

What remains are a number of plain truths, facts and conſequences, which have a more near or remote relation with the ſubject on hand, and may ſerve to throw light upon it.

In the FIRST place, we may take notice of two particulars, which perhaps have not been ſufficiently noticed.

One is, the ceremonial law, and the covenant of circumciſion which was annexed to it, appear to be diſannulled and paſt away.

The following may make this matter plain: The diſannulling or aboliſhing of the law we ſee, Heb. vii. 18. There is verily a diſannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakneſs and unprofitableneſs thereof. Alſo Gal. iii. 19, Wherefore then ſerveth the law? It was added becauſe of tranſgreſſions *till* the *ſeed* ſhould *come* to *whom* the *promiſe* was made. What ſeed this is, to whom the promiſe was made, we are told in the 16th verſe of the ſame chapter, "Now to Abraham and his ſeed were the promiſes made: He ſaith not to ſeeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy ſeed, which is Chriſt." We hence ſee, that Chriſt was the ſeed to whom the promiſes were made, and that the *law* (the ceremonial law) was added becauſe of tranſgreſſions, till the ſeed, i. e. Chriſt, ſhould

come. It is hence plain, that the ceremonial law was to continue no longer than till Chriſt came.

The covenant of circumciſion appears to be annexed to this law. For ſays Jeſus Chriſt, John vii. 23, If a man on the ſabbath day *receive circumciſion*, that the *law* of *Moſes* ſhould not be *broken*, are ye angry at me? &c.

That this covenant of circumciſion, or the Sinai covenant, which includes it, hath paſſed away, or is diſannulled, ſee Heb. viii. 13. 'In that he ſaith a new covenant, he hath made the firſt old: now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vaniſh away.'

Beſides, circumciſion is evidently a very important part of that law, which is diſannulled; for, ſaith Paul to the Galatians, chap. v. 2, 3. If ye be *circumciſed*, Chriſt ſhall *profit* you *nothing*. For I teſtify again, ſays he, to every man that is *circumciſed*, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

It is hence plain, that the ceremonial law is no longer binding; and that the covenant of circumciſion, which was incorporated with it, hath vaniſhed away.

The other particular is this; the promiſes which were made to Abraham and his ſeed, were not made to him in *circumciſion*, but in *uncircumciſion*; and the covenant which was confirmed of God to Abraham in Chriſt, was while he was in *uncircumciſion*, and about twenty-four years before the *covenant* of *circumciſion* was given. *Rom.* iv. 8, 9, 10.—*Gal.* iii. 16, 17.—*Gen.* xii. 3, 4, 7, and xvii. 10, 17.

Moreover, when Paul ſpeaks of the covenant which was confirmed of God in Chriſt, he points out the exact year when this was made known or confirmed with Abraham, as though he had a foreſight, as certainly the Holy Ghoſt had, of the contention which ſhould be long continued for want of judiciouſly underſtanding what covenant ſhould be diſannulled, and what covenant the law could not diſannul. He tells us, *Gal.* iii. 17, that this covenant, which cannot be made void, was four hundred and thirty years before the law; whereas the covenant of circumciſion was about four hundred and ſix years before the law, with which circumciſion was united.

Seeing matters are thus, what, I pray you, my hearers, have we to do with the covenant of circumciſion? If we keep it, Chriſt ſhall profit us nothing; if we obſerve ſomething which we ſubſtitute in its place, Chriſt may profit us as little in ſuch obſervance.

I know it will be asked, Is not the church the same now that it was in Abraham's day? I answer, yes, and the same that it was in Noah's, Enoch's, and Adam's, and the same that it ever will be. It will be asked again, Is not the covenant the same which it was in Abraham's time? Yes, the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ is unchangeably the same; but the covenant of circumcision which God made with Abraham, renewed with Isaac and Jacob, and solemnized with Israel in the wilderness, (*Deut* xxix 10, 11, 12, 13,) is far from being the covenant, the *new covenant*, which God makes with the house of Israel in our day. The covenant of circumcision was, more than 1700 years ago, decaying, waxing old, and ready to vanish away. But you will again say, Is not the church composed of parents and children, and of households, now, as it was in Abraham's day? Let Paul answer how it was (as touching the gospel) in Abraham's day and after. *Rom.* ix. 6, 7, 8. 'They are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they that are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.' Just so now. The children of God, the children of the promise are counted for the seed, and compose the church; and of those who appear thus should the visible church be made up, and of none else. But, if by the question be meant, Does not church-membership descend from parents to children, and from masters to servants, as it appears to have done under the old covenant of circumcision? The answer is, The New-Testament no where acknowledges, nor does it know, any thing about a church thus made up. I would that all good men would consent to take New-Testament directions and examples by which to constitute and guide New-Testament churches.

But it will be asked once more, Hath not baptism come into the place of circumcision, and to be applied to similar subjects? *Answer.* Circumcision was a positive institution, and so is baptism. Abraham and the Israelites knew nothing to whom circumcision should be administered, but as they received direction from the Divine Institutor; just so it is with respect to the administration of baptism. The Christians at Antioch, the Elders at Jerusalem, the church of Galatia, and Paul and Barnabas, knew nothing of baptism being substituted for circumcision. *Acts* xv. 1 to 35; *Gal.* iii. and v. chapters. We

know nothing, and can know nothing, as to whom baptism is to be administered, but from what Christ hath told us as to the subjects. Now—

Secondly, I ask, What evidence have we from the Bible that infants are to be baptized?

You may reply, They are included in the covenant. What covenant? In that of circumcision? Surely not, for that hath vanished away. If you say, In the covenant that was confirmed of God in Christ, I *answer*, It was not this covenant which entitled Abraham's household to circumcision; therefore, though your children be in this covenant, that does not, of itself, entitle them to baptism; whether baptism be in the place of circumcision, or not. You will then say, What can entitle our children to baptism? *Answer*. Their being disciples, and so coming within the compass, or pale, of the baptismal institution.

As we can know nothing of the subjects of baptism, any more than Abraham and Israel could of the subjects of circumcision, but from what we are informed in the institution, and in what is said upon it, we will inquire what the Bible saith of this matter.

If the Lord, in his word, hath not given us sufficient instruction upon this subject, we must practise in the dark, for we have no where else to go.

We will begin with John. 1. Did he baptize any children? We have no evidence that he did. Besides, he told the multitude which attended his ministry, not to plead Abraham, or Abraham's covenant, as a title to baptism. *Matt.* iii. 7, 8, 9, 10.

2. Did Christ's disciples, whilst he was with them, and whilst they *made* and *baptized* more *disciples* than John, baptize infants, or any visibly unbelieving children? No evidence that they did.

3. Is there any evidence from my text, which contains the words of the institution, that infants, or unbelieving households, were to be baptized? None; but the contrary.

4. Is there any passage in the New Testament, which commands, or says so much as one word, that infants are to be baptized? Not one.

5. Is there any example, which shows that the apostles baptized any upon the faith of parents, or masters, or upon the faith or promises of any others?

I know, my brethren, there are three inſtances, which are ſuppoſed by ſome to favour the affirmative of the queſtion. I have rather been of the ſame opinion. If it be ſo, may facts convince us.

We will look at each of theſe examples ſeparately.

The firſt ſuppoſed example we find at Philippi. Here was a woman, named Lydia; ſhe appears to have been a woman of buſineſs. She belonged to Thyatira, but was now at Philippi, probably ſelling her merchandize, with ſeveral attendants. The hiſtory is thus related, *Acts* xvi. 13th, 14th and 15th verſes. "On the ſabbath day, we (Paul and other diſciples) went out of the city, by a river ſide, where prayer was wont to be made, and we ſat down, and ſpake unto the women who reſorted thither. And a certain woman, named Lydia, a ſeller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, who worſhipped God, heard us, whoſe heart the Lord opened, that ſhe attended unto the things which were ſpoken of Paul. And when ſhe was baptized and her houſehold, ſhe beſought us, ſaying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my houſe and abide there."

This is all we know of the matter. She belonged to another city. She worſhipped God. She was, on the ſabbath day, by the ſide of a river, where prayer was wont to be made. The Lord opened her heart to attend to what Paul ſaid. Her ſervants were with her. She had a houſe, either her own, or one taken for the time. She was baptized, and her houſehold. As to her having infants with her, you can tell, as well as I. Moreover, whether her ſervants believed the words of Paul, you can, if you attend to the circumſtances, form as correct a judgment, perhaps, as any other can make up for you.

The things to be conſidered are, 1. Lydia was a godly woman. 2. She attended meeting. Paul found her where prayer was wont to be made, where religious women had been accuſtomed to meet. 3. She, like other religious people, took her houſehold to meeting with her. 4. It appears that Paul baptized none of her houſehold, but ſuch as were with her at the female praying meeting. 5. The ſtrong probability is, that Lydia, being a pious woman, one who worſhipped God, would ſelect for her attendants, maidens or ſervants who alſo were worſhippers of God. In verſe 40, we are told, the apoſtles entered into the houſe of Lydia, comforted the brethren, &c.

You will weigh these circumstances, and make up for yourselves, so far as you can, a righteous judgment.

The next example is recorded in the same chapter, and appears to be in the same city. The history of the matter is contained in the 25th verse, and on to the 34th. The noticeable facts, and on which we must make up our judgment, are:—The jailer says, Sirs, What must I do to be saved? Paul and Silas answered, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he was baptized, he and all his, straightway—and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

Here are three things to be put together. 1. The word of the Lord Jesus was spoken to them all. 2. They were all baptized. 3. They all believed in God. Whether here be any example of infant baptism, you will judge, each one for himself.

As some have supposed that this passage, and a few others of similar import, afford an argument in favour of sprinkling, it may be well to give it a moment's consideration. Here we are told, that the keeper of the prison brought out Paul and Silas. Where he brought them to, seems plainly enough to be gathered from the 32d verse, in which we find them speaking to the jailer the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. In the next verse we are informed that the jailer and all his were baptized. Where they were baptized, we are not told. One thing however is plain, it was not in the house; for in verse 34 it is said, When (i. e. after the household were baptized) he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house. From these observations, the following things appear:—1. That Paul and Silas were in the jailer's house, when they spake the word of the Lord to all that were in his house. 2. That when the ordinance of baptism was administered, they were not in his house. 3. That the mode of baptizing then in use rendered it inconvenient to be performed in the jailer's house. 4. After the ordinance was administered, they went into the house. How this favours sprinkling, I see not.

The other supposed example is in 1 *Cor.* i. 16, where Paul says, I baptized also the household of Stephanas. In the 16th chap. 15th verse, we have a short history of Stephanas's household; it is thus, "Ye know the household of Stephanas, that it

is the firſt fruits of Achaia, and that *they* have addicted themſelves to the miniſtry of the ſaints." Whether there is here found any evidence of infant baptiſm, you will determine for yourſelves.

6. Are the encouragements which are given to parents in behalf of their children, made to their having them baptized; or are the bleſſings connected with their dedicating them to the Lord, and with their bringing them up in his *nurture* and *admonition?* With which, your Bibles will inform you.

7. Do we, or do any, pretend, that there is any certain evidence, from either precept or example, for the baptizing of infants? Indeed there is none. Probably not many ſuppoſe it.

8. Is there, as ſome have affirmed, the ſame evidence for baptizing infants, that there is for obſerving the Lord's day, for admitting females to communion, and which there is for family prayer?

There is a day called the Lord's day, and religious things were to be obſerved on it. Are there infants, who are called baptized infants, and are they to be attended to as ſuch?

Females and males are declared to be all one in Chriſt, and ſo fit ſubjects for the communion of ſaints. Are infants unequivocally declared to be fit ſubjects of baptiſm?

We have examples of family prayer, and are commanded to pray with all prayer. Are there ſcripture examples of infant baptiſm, and are we commanded to baptize all; and ſo are infants included?

9. Ought I to teach you infant baptiſm, if our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath no where directed me to do thus?

10. Hath Jeſus Chriſt ſpoken one word of baptiſm, as being ſubſtituted for circumciſion? Hath he any where commanded his miniſters to teach this ſubſtitution?

Thirdly. Shall we go, and are we under the neceſſity of going, to the law and covenant of circumciſion, to prove infant baptiſm, when both this law and covenant have long ſince waxed old, been repealed, and have periſhed? *Heb.* vii. 18, 19, and viii. 13.

But you will aſk, Are not the bleſſings of Abraham come on the Gentiles? *Anſ.* Yes. You will then ſay, Are not our children included in the promiſe? *Anſwer.* If they be Chriſt's, then are they Abraham's ſeed, and heirs according to the promiſe. *Gal.* iii. 29. Abraham's children, after the fleſh, were not included in the promiſe, as the Pedobaptiſts of our day

would have theirs. But you will say again, Are not our children included in the covenant? In what covenant? In that of circumcision? Surely not. For though that covenant was often renewed, yet it hath long since passed away. Is your question this? Are they not included in that covenant, which was confirmed of God in Christ, twenty-four years previously to the covenant of circumcision? I answer, No man knoweth, nor can know, but as your children give evidence, that they possess the Spirit of Christ. But as I have observed to you before, so I say again, even were your children included in this covenant, and saints; this does not of itself give them any right to baptism, any more, than Abraham's being included in the same covenant gave him a right to circumcision. This covenant determines nothing as to the one, or the other. The covenant of circumcision determined who were to be circumcised. So the ordinance or institution of Baptism determines who are to be baptized. One determines no more who are to be admitted to the other, than does the covenant of an everlasting priesthood (*Numb.* xxv. 13.) determine who shall be ministers in gospel days. In short, there is no arguing from one to the other in this matter. They are both of them positive institutions, and nothing can be known of either, but what is revealed in its particular institution.

While viewing this subject, you will inquire, What will become of our children? I answer, God only knoweth. You may rejoin; But what shall we do for them? *Ans.* Dedicate them to God, and, like faithful Christians, bring them up for him.

Fourthly. We will now attend to some legitimate consequences which follow, upon supposition that the subjects of baptism are to be determined from the subjects of circumcision.

1. One consequence is, every man who is converted to the Christian religion is to be baptized, and all his household, though he may have three hundred and seventeen training soldiers born in his own house. Not only are these soldiers to be baptized, but their wives, children, and all other servants, who belong to this great man's house. A thousand infidels are to be baptized, because one great man, their master, is christianized.

2. These soldiers, with their wives, children and servants, are all to be considered and treated as church members, or as being in covenant. I confess this does not look to me gospel-like.

3. Another conſequence is, the adults among theſe, and among all others, who are baptized, are not only to be admitted to the communion, but required to come. I aſk, Could ſuch a communion be called the communion of ſaints?—one great and good man, with hundreds of unconverted ſervants!

4. All who have been baptized, and have not, for miſdemeanor, been expelled the church, have a right to baptiſm for their children; and no man may forbid them.

5. Another conſequence is, notwithſtanding Chriſt ſaith, My kingdom is not of this world; yet the regulations were ſuch, eſpecially the mean of admiſſion into it, as ſtrongly, and of infallible conſequence, tended to make it of this world, and that abundantly ſo.

6. Another conſequence is, many learned and pious miniſters of New-England are inconſiſtent with themſelves, in requiring of perſons baptized in infancy a profeſſion of experimental religion, as a term of communion. It was not ſo done in Iſrael.

7. Another conſequence is, many of the ſame pious and learned miniſters are very inconſiſtent with themſelves, in refuſing baptiſm to the children of ſuch as are, by their baptiſm, in regular church memberſhip, or in covenant, as it is termed.

I have taken, as you obſerve, for granted, what I do not believe to be true, that ſprinkling, or a very partial waſhing, is baptiſm.

Laſtly. Another conſequence is, it doth, ſo far as it hath its *perfect work*, deſtroy the very idea of the goſpel church, contradict the prophets, and make Paul and others ſpeak not the truth, and it throws us back to the ſtate of the Jewiſh church.

Jeremiah, propheſying of the goſpel church, ſaith, chap. xxxi. 31 to 34, Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the houſe of Iſrael, and with the houſe of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with your fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; but this ſhall be the covenant that I will make with the houſe of Iſrael, After thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they ſhall be my people. And they ſhall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, Know the Lord, for they ſhall all know me, from the leaſt of them, unto the greateſt of them, ſaith the Lord.

If this means any thing, it certainly means that the gospel church shall exceed in purity the Jewish church; that it shall, at least, be composed of professing saints. *Isaiah* says, chap. liv. 13, All thy children shall be taught of the Lord. The latter of these passages, our Lord applies to the gospel day, *John* vi. 45: The former is applied to the gospel church by Paul, *Heb.* viii.

Moses says in Deut. xviii. 15, 19. The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

This, and much more, Peter applies to gospel days, and to the gospel church, *Acts* iii. 22, to the end. Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul that will not hear that Prophet, shall be *destroyed from among the people.* Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you in *turning* away *every one* of you *from his* iniquities.

Through the New-Testament, the gospel church is, or appears to be, spoken of as a society, nation or church of saints; and as being greatly different from the nation of the Jews. But the subjects of baptism being determined by the subjects of circumcision, brings the gospel church, as to its constituent materials, to the same condition with the church under the law of carnal ordinances. Indeed, what is now, generally, called the gospel church, is hardly to be distinguished by its members from the old Jewish church.

Do not these things look as though the twelve hundred and sixty years of Antichrist's reign were not wholly past? Is there not, my brethren, some defiling error at the root of all this? Can such streams, as are these consequences, flow from a pure fountain? Indeed many good ministers of our land have long since discovered some of these evil consequences, and have laboured hard to rectify them. President Edwards, and many

others, made a noble stand against this flood of *corruption*; yet they discovered not the fountain, whence these streams flow, and will flow, till it be removed. Putting or mistaking the covenant of circumcision, for the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ to Abraham, twenty-four years before circumcision was known, and substituting baptism for circumcision, and determining the subjects of the one by the subjects of the other, without any authority thus to do, have produced all this corruption, deception, and world of evil. Would good ministers be persuaded to lay the axe at the root of the tree, as John did, the evils would be soon rectified.

The subject, on which we now are, is of such high concernment to the church of Christ, generally, and your conviction of the truth of it being almost, or quite, essential to our future peace and union together, I would willingly omit nothing which might chase away your darkness, and cause the true light to appear. I will, therefore, add here the history of infant baptism. Should we find that infant baptism is of men, as we have already found sprinkling to be, it is hoped that you will either give it up, or practise it as being of man's device, and not, as Mr. Dickinson would have it, as belonging to infants by divine right.

The first information which we have of infant baptism is about the middle of the second century; about which time Irenæus, in one of his epistles, has the following sentence: "The church received a tradition from the apostles to administer baptism to little children or infants."*

The next account we have of this matter (if we except Tertullian, who opposed the practice) is given us by Origen, in about the middle of the third century. His words are, "Little children are baptized for the remission of sins." For the remission of original sin, or pollution; for of this is he speaking. Again he says, "The church had an *order* from the apostles to give baptism to infants."

Another part of the history of infant baptism we have in a quotation from the decisions of the famous Council at Carthage in the year 253. It is this: "From baptism and the grace of God *none* ought to be *prohibited*; especially infants *need our help* and the divine mercy." We have a farther account from Augustine, who flourished about the middle of the fourth century. His words (writing of infant baptism) are, "Let none,

* Prof. Dickinson on Baptism.

therefore, ſo much as *whiſper* any other doctrine in *your ears:* This the church hath always had, has always held."

The next we hear of infant baptiſm is, that the practice was confirmed, and ſo put beyond diſpute, by Pope Innocent the Firſt.

Now fire and ſword were the all-concluſive arguments uſed for the conviction and reformation of all who refuſed to practiſe, or dared to call in queſtion, infant baptiſm. We will paſs over the horrid perſecutions, which now began to be, and have ever ſince been practiſed, at intervals, upon thoſe who would not ſubmit to the divine right of infants to baptiſm, as conferred on them by the ghoſtly Popes of Rome.

Luther, the famous German reformer, ſays, "that infant baptiſm was not determined till Pope Innocentius;" and Grotius, in his annotations on *Matth.* xix. ſays, "It was not enjoined till the Council of Carthage."*

We ought, however, to trace the hiſtory of infant baptiſm one ſtep farther, and notice Calvin, and a multitude ſince, who were unwilling to acknowledge their dependence on the Mother of Harlots, for their authority in this matter; and therefore with great ingenuity have diſcovered infant baptiſm, as a goſpel ordinance, or the right of infants to it, in the law of Moſes. Indeed they have ſuppoſed that this doctrine is implied in a number of paſſages of the New-Teſtament. Yet, I believe, none who practiſe it, are willing to venture this New-Teſtament ordinance upon New-Teſtament evidence.

Here you ſee that *tradition* is the foundation of infant baptiſm; *error*, the belief that *baptiſm waſhes* away *original ſin*, the nurſe of its tender age; the church of Rome, the confirmer and ſtrong defender of it; and the long ſince repealed ceremonial law of Moſes, the evidence for it. You ſee, the introduction of infant baptiſm was tradition. Upon this foundation hath it manifeſtly reſted ever ſince. All the ingenious arguments of learned and pious men, can, in fact, add no ſtrength to its firſt foundation. The firſt we hear of it is, it was placed upon tradition, and there it hath reſted, or been ſtanding uneaſily, ever ſince.

Beſides, this *tradition*, as well as the practice which followed, is doubtleſs the offſpring of error, and man's invention. At beſt we have but one witneſs for it, in the mouth of whom nothing can be eſtabliſhed. Origen ſays, "The church had an *order* from the Apoſtles." Still we have but one witneſs.

* Ancient Dialogue Reviſed.

Moreover, the very expreſſions of the Pedobaptiſts ſhow that they were from the beginning oppoſed by the Baptiſts. Irenæus ſays, "We have a tradition." Origen ſays, "We have an order." The Council of Carthage ſay, "Infants ought not to be *prohibited* from baptiſm." Auguſtine ſaith, "Let none ſo much as whiſper any other doctrine in your ears."—Does not every ſyllable indicate the diſpute which the Baptiſts had with the inventers and ſupporters of this anti-evangelical principle and practice?

It is worthy of a moment's conſideration, that not one of the moſt ancient fathers makes the leaſt pretenſion that infant baptiſm is ſupported by ſo much as one paſſage in either the Old-Teſtament, or the New; and they mention no authority but *tradition*, and an *order* from the Apoſtles, &c. which, at beſt, are very uncertain things.

Whoever can fix their faith, continue their practice, and venture their reſponſibility on ſuch a traditionary foundation, I cannot. Upon this foundation for our practice, have both we and our fathers ventured to oppoſe the Baptiſts, with greater or leſs degrees of virulence; whilſt, by our tradition, we have greatly injured the ordinance of Chriſt, if not, in this inſtance, made void the law of God.

In fine: Was not infant baptiſm firſt introduced to eſcape the offence of the croſs? Is it not, with many, unknowingly continued for the ſame end? It bringeth the church to its former ſtate as under the law. If I yet preach *circumciſion*, why do I yet ſuffer perſecution? Then is the offence of the croſs ceaſed, *Gal.* v. 11.

SERMON VII.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

I HAVE already ſet before you the principal part of what I intended under the two firſt propoſitions in my text. What remains is to bring forward—

III. Christ's command to all his ministering servants to teach all nations, or those who should be discipled among them, to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. And then—

Lastly. His comforting and strengthening promise, which is, And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

To these propositions, your serious, Christian attention is requested. The first is—

III. Christ's command to the ministers of his gospel to teach all nations, or those who should be discipled among them, to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them.

Here you see the extensiveness of my orders received, and which I must carefully observe, would I be obedient unto the Heavenly Teacher, who came from God.

Christ Jesus, when personally on earth, gave a new edition of his own and his Father's mind and will. In this new edition, he abrogated or left out, many ceremonies of the old, as being no longer useful. Under the old edition, the church was in its childhood, and therefore under such tutors and governors as were not needed in her riper years. In this new edition, Christ hath pointed out what is to be preserved of the old. The sum of the moral law and the prophets, were to continue in force. These are, indeed, in the very nature of things, binding on accountable creatures. But when Christ, the anointed and expected Messiah, was come, then all those rites, sacrifices and typical institutions of the ceremonial law, which were, together, as a school-master to lead the observer to Christ, were disannulled, being no longer of use.

You see what ministers have authority to teach for both doctrine and practice. It is what Christ hath commanded them, and nothing which is contrary from it.

In time past I have taught you the precepts of Christ, somewhat largely. As I have taught them, so you have, as is believed, received them to the saving of your souls. The ordinance of the supper I have taught in its simplicity, and so have you received it. You have also been informed, that Jesus Christ appointed baptism, as an ordinance to be observed in his church. But what that ordinance was, and who were the subjects of it, you have not been particularly told, till of late. Nor had I, till a short time since, a clear understanding of either. I, no doubt, ought to have known them before; but till I did, I could not teach them to you. When I came to

the knowledge of them, it was no longer in my power to be faithful to Chriſt, and refuſe to teach them. In the ſimplicity of my heart have I taught you what is baptiſm, and who are to be baptized.

Whether theſe things be, or be not, agreeable to my former notions of them, is nothing to the point. One thing I am ſettled in, I have, of late, taught them to you, as Chriſt hath commanded me.

Not only was it my duty to teach you theſe things, but I am commanded to teach you to obſerve them: For then are you Chriſt's diſciples, when you do all things whatſoever he hath commanded you.

To obſerve theſe things, is like obedient children to receive inſtruction, and then to ſearch the ſcriptures, that you may know how theſe things are. It belongs to me to teach you—

1. To obſerve theſe things till you underſtand them. And then—

2. To obſerve them in your practice.

1. Would you walk in all the ſtatutes and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs, you muſt obſerve theſe things till you underſtand them.

You and I have been unreaſonably prejudiced againſt light and truth in theſe matters. If I do not misjudge, the Lord hath, in anſwer to prayer, afforded me the needed light and knowledge upon the ſubject. It was not in a day, nor in a month, after my prejudices received a ſhock, and my mind partial conviction, that I obtained ſatisfaction. Nor can I expect that you will, all of you, poſſeſs ſuch a ready mind, as to give up your long, and almoſt inveterate prejudices, and receive the light at once. It is by little and little, that anti-chriſtian errors muſt be deſtroyed from the church, and from your hearts, as well as from mine.

You may expect to find me ready, at any time, and at all times, to afford you every inſtruction, and to anſwer any objection which may occur to your candid minds. You ſhould have your Bibles always nigh you, and poſſeſs continually a prayerful, teachable ſpirit. Be determined to hearken to none but Chriſt, and to be obedient to all his commands.

Be careful to avoid all bitterneſs and evil ſpeaking. Wiſdom will not dwell with ſtrife; nor will the wrath of man work the righteouſneſs of God.

2. It belongs to me to teach you to obſerve the ordinance of baptiſm, and the proper ſubjects, in your practice. You muſt

underſtand theſe things before you can acceptably practiſe them. Some of you, no doubt, ſufficiently underſtand them to proceed to practice. But I have not thought it duty to haſten your practice, or to lead you by example, leſt the minds of others ſhould be injured. It is a time to weaken prejudices, and not to increaſe them. Wiſdom dwells with prudence. Many of your minds, as well as mine, are, with pleaſing expectation, looking forward to the time, when we may, with nighly or quite all our brethren with us, keep all the ordinances of the goſpel, as Chriſt hath commanded us.

When you ſhall underſtand theſe things, happy will you be if you practiſe them; for all goſpel obedience gives pleaſure in the practice.

As Moſes had much to do in Egypt, before God ſaid unto him, 'Speak unto the people that they go forward,' ſo, my brethren, I may have much to do before things ſhall be in readineſs, and before the Lord ſhall bid me ſpeak, ſaying unto you, GO FORWARD. But, if the Lord will, I would live to ſee that day.

After Iſrael went forward, and were baptized under Moſes in the cloud, and in the ſea, they had a tedious wilderneſs to paſs; ſo it may be with us. But, ſhould we obſerve the pillar of cloud and of fire, we ſhall come to the promiſed land; and it may be, with much ſafety and ſpeed, ſhould we hearken to the good counſel of Joſhua.

You know, my brethren, as it is my duty to teach you to obſerve all things whatſoever Chriſt hath commanded me, ſo it is your duty to receive inſtruction, and be obedient. Your obedience is not to be rendered to me, but to Jeſus Chriſt, and to the word of his teſtimony.

It will doubtleſs occur to your minds, Whom ſhall we hear? One miniſter teaches us one thing, and another teaches differently. You are to hear no man any farther than he ſhall teach you as the man Chriſt Jeſus hath commanded him. Miniſters have no authority, any farther than they receive it from him. He hath given them no power to teach, but what he hath commanded. When they tranſcribe out of the old into the new edition of God's word and will, and tell us that the rite and covenant of circumciſion are to explain to us the obſervance of a New-Teſtament ordinance, we are not obliged to believe them, unleſs they point us to the place where Chriſt hath ſo commanded. You are to obey them who have the rule over you. But even Paul was not to be followed any farther than he followed

Chriſt. So it ought to be with you, in hearkening to what your teachers ſay. Miniſters are but men, and they have proved themſelves to be ſo, by changing the ordinance of baptiſm into quite a different thing, and by adminiſtering their new rite to ſubjects to whom Jeſus Chriſt never commanded it. It ſurely is a ſurpriſing thing, and not to be accounted for, but from the relics of human depravity, that ſo many good men ſhould, unknowingly, do and teach things which are quite aſide from what Chriſt hath commanded them.

It is too late for you, my hearers, to cloak yourſelves under what great and good men have ſaid; for the truth of the Lord hath already been told you. Had I not come and ſpoken to you this word of Chriſt, you would not have had ſin; but now have you no cloak for diſobedience.

We now come—

Laſtly, To conſider Chriſt's comforting and ſtrengthening promiſe to his miniſtering ſervants: which is, And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

Chriſt Jeſus hath been with his miniſters; and he will be—

1. In preparing them for their office. He was perſonally with his firſt goſpel heralds, for the ſpace of three years, or more; after this he left them for a ſhort time; in this ſhort interval they paſſed a ſevere trial. He was with them again, at times, for forty days. Soon after this he ſent his Spirit upon them, and filled them with it to a remarkable degree. Then they were prepared for their office. They ſpeedily filled it remarkably, and the effect was wonderful. Three thouſand were converted in a day.

Chriſt is as really, though not ſo apparently, with all his goſpel meſſengers, in preparing them to go forth into his harveſt. Thoſe, who have not Chriſt with them, to prepare them for their office, are but as wolves in ſheep's clothing, when they go forth into the miniſtry. They preach for *filthy lucre*, and frequently have their *reward*. It is too often the caſe, that thoſe, whom Chriſt hath prepared, are obliged to go into the field, or make tents for their ſupport, whilſt ſuch as run, not being ſent, ſwim in luxury.

2. Jeſus Chriſt will be with his miniſters in bringing divine things to their remembrance.

It is the Lord's Spirit which cauſeth divine truth to occur to the minds of his ſervants. Truths, which have been forgotten for months, and it may be for years, or paſſages which before were underſtood, may be, and not unfrequently are, freſh and

plain in the minds of his ſervants, for their comfort, or for the comfort and inſtruction of others, or for the comfort and edification of both.

3. Chriſt will be with his miniſters in affording them wiſdom, fortitude, and faithfulneſs.

The entrance of his word giveth light. He maketh light their paths, and ordereth all their ſteps. He maketh their feet like hinds' feet, and cauſeth them to be ſwifter than the eagle, ſtronger than lions, wiſe as ſerpents, and harmleſs as doves, With what wiſdom did Stephen ſpeak! With what fortitude did Peter, Paul, and a thouſand others, addreſs their auditories! With what wiſdom hath he made his ſervants to ſpeak! With what fortitude to bear, with what faithfulneſs to endure, for his name's ſake! How remarkably hath it been thus, in times of perſecution! And when will you find a time, when they that are born after the fleſh do not perſecute thoſe who are born after the Spirit! How often is it the caſe, when miniſters, like Paul, wax bold, and teſtify that Jeſus is the Chriſt, and what are his words and inſtitutions, that they are perſecuted, openly or more ſecretly!

4. Chriſt is and will be with his miniſtering ſervants whilſt they are reproached and ſuffering for his name and truth's ſake.

He ſays to them all, If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. When Chriſt's miniſters are reviled and ſuffer for his ſake, his truth and Spirit bear their ſpirits up. He gives them to believe and know, that though they weep now, they ſhall ſoon rejoice; that their light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are preparing them for and working out for them, a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory.

5. Chriſt Jeſus will be with his faithful miniſters in giving them to ſee their deſire upon his enemies.

This appears to be particularly implied in my text. They are commanded to go and diſciple all nations. Their deſire is to ſee diſciples mutiplied. They go forth, Chriſt goes forth with them. Many of Chriſt's enemies ſubmit to his yoke, which is eaſy, and to his burden, which is light. In this are they gratified, and their deſire on them is accompliſhed.

6 Chriſt is with his miniſters in explaining and defending his truth.

How did Peter, Paul and others, in the firſt ages of Chriſtianity, explain and vindicate the truth, to the confounding of

both Jews and Gentiles! Whenever, in ages since, he hath spoken the word, great hath been the company, or force, of those who have published, explained and defended it. Martin Luther, John Calvin, and a number more in the reformation, were like flames of fire: nothing could stop them from publishing, explaining and defending the truths of the Saviour, for he was with them.

You will ask, How is it that Christ is with his ministers, when they contradict one the other, and themselves too? *Answer.* It is not said, that Christ is with his ministers in explaining and defending error. Error is human; truth is divine. When ministers undertake to support error, they go without Christ's blessing and presence in this their labour. Hence it is that they are so contradictory and inconsistent; and are obliged to wrest the scriptures from their plain and easy sense, to support a beloved prejudice. But when they take up for truth, plain scripture supports them, and they have plain and pleasant work, and their subjects supported with ease, as you have seen whilst attending to the several truths in my text.

Besides, it may be the case, that some very good men may mix truth and error, the commands of God and their own traditions, together; and, whilst practising accordingly, they may enjoy a comfortable frame of mind, and hence conclude that their beloved compound is all from heaven. This may be illustrated by the following example. Mr. S. finds it to be a truth, that his infant offspring, as well as every thing else, should be devoutly given to God. He hath received and holds a tradition from the fathers, that his infants should be baptized. He publickly gives them to the Lord, and solemnly promises to instruct them in the way of truth and duty. He, at the same time hath the ordinance of baptism administered to them, or administers it himself. During the whole transaction he possesses much comfort in his mind. His consequence is, the whole matter is according to truth, just as God would have it. Is not this going a little too much by sense, and not quite enough by scripture? Does it not contain a *spice* of enthusiasm? Would not the good man have had the same mental satisfaction, had he possessed the same spirituality, and yet had omitted that part which is enjoined by tradition only?

Lastly: The great Captain of Salvation is with his ministers, to teach, lead and comfort them, in all their trials, in all their straits. Whosoever will leave them, he will not. Though he, the Great High Priest of our profession, when suffering for

his people's ſins, was left alone—all forſook him; yet, whenever his friends are afflicted, he kindly calls, ſaying, Lo, I am with you. This hath been the ſtay of good men in all ages, in all circumſtances. Thoſe who have wandered about in ſheep ſkins and goat-ſkins, who have been afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy, have found their refuge here. There is nothing like this to ſupport the feeble, diſtreſſed ſoul. When godly miniſters have been obliged to leave their people, yes, and their families, and ſometimes their native country, for the truth's ſake, this hath ſuſtained them—Chriſt was with them. Preſident Edwards, for a noble attempt at partial reformation, was conſtrained to flee his beloved charge; but Chriſt was, no doubt, with him. Should I, for laying the axe at the root of the tree, be obliged to leave you, though, for the preſent I ſee no particular reaſon to apprehend ſuch an event, yet I truſt this will be my hiding place——Jeſus, who will be with me.

APPLICATION.

FROM what hath been ſaid in the preceding diſcourſes, it appears—

1. That the two ſides of the controverſy between the Baptiſts and the Pedobaptiſts ſtand thus.

Before I ſtate the two ſides of the controverſy, it is but reaſonable that I define thoſe whom it reſpects. By the Baptiſts, on one ſide, I mean the regular Calviniſtic Baptiſts. By the Pedobaptiſts on the other, I now intend the Calviniſtic Congregationaliſts among them. I give this definition, that I may be clearly underſtood.

You ſee both ſides are Calviniſts, that is, they are agreed in what are ſtyled the doctrines of grace. They are both of the congregational order, as it reſpects the government of the churches.

Now for the controverſy---and it is this: The Baptiſts hold immerſion only to be baptiſm. The Pedobaptiſts hold that ſprinkling may be ſubſtituted for immerſion, and may anſwer juſt as well.

The Baptiſts hold that the ſcriptures know nothing of a Chriſtian ordinance of baptiſm for unbelievers and infidels. The Pedobaptiſts hold that, if a great man, who hath a thouſand ſlaves, ſhould become a diſciple, then all his houſehold are to be counted diſciples, and are to be baptized.

The Baptiſts hold that the church of the New-Teſtament is

composed of visible or professed saints. The consistent Pedobaptists hold, that this great man, his thousand slaves, together with his wife and children, all belong to the gospel church, though he only be a believer in Christ.

The Baptists hold that none have a right to partake of the Lord's Supper but those who are his friends. The consistent Pedobaptists hold, that all the adults in this great man's household, if they be not guilty of gross immorality, have a right to come.

The Baptists plead New-Testament authority for the defence of their principles and practice, where they differ from their brethren of the Pedobaptists. The Pedobaptists in support of their sentiments plead convenience, and the covenant and rite of circumcision, which were decaying, waxing old, and ready to vanish away, more than 1700 years ago.

The Baptists bring nighly threescore texts of scripture, which are plainly and fully to their point in favour of immersion. The Pedobaptists mention three or four texts, which, at most, are but very doubtfully in their favour; and, when rightly understood, appear fully against them.

What advantage, my brethren, have the Pedobaptists over the Baptists? And with what crime or error, in this matter do they stand convicted?

2. It appears that gospel ministers have no authority to teach Christians, that their children and servants should be baptized, because Abraham's were circumcised.

Christ hath no where commanded them to teach thus. Christ hath no where commanded them to teach infant baptism at all, or baptism upon the faith of another; much less, that they are to be baptized because Abraham's were circumcised.

3. It appears, that many of the pious and learned clergy of New-England have made some noble and promising advances towards truth in this matter; yet in this they are inconsistent with themselves.

They will receive none to the communion but such as profess faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as repentance for sin; and they will administer baptism to the children of no other. Here, in two instances, they refuse to follow the law of circumcision. One, in refusing to admit to the supper, impenitent, though civil, baptized persons; the other, in not admitting to baptism the children of all those who have been baptized. This is consistent with truth so far as it goes; but inconsistent with

the notion that the ſubjects of baptiſm are to be determined from the ſubjects of circumciſion.

Theſe good men, ſo long as they poſſeſs their preſent light, muſt come over to the true Baptiſt ground, or ſubmit to the imputation of inconſiſtency. I wiſh them to come over. For myſelf, I expect to, though my carnal nature hates the name of a Baptiſt as much as theirs does. But my better judgment tells me, that the Baptiſts are on the goſpel ground.

4. It is a matter of lamentation, that pious and learned miniſters have not a little more ſelf-denial; then they might be conſiſtent with themſelves, and with truth too. Could I be with them, and aſk them this plain queſtion, Do you not find a little backwardneſs from ſearching critically into the primitive meaning and practice of baptiſm? I fear they would anſwer with ſome reluctance.

To me, I confeſs, it appears an hard caſe, that the Baptiſts ſhould ſuffer ſo much reproach, merely on account of their ſentiments, when many of our beſt old divines have given them the ground, and confeſſed that their ſentiments, as to the mode, are from heaven, and ours from convenience. Our oppoſition to them, on account of the ſubjects, appears but little better, being but poorly ſupported by ſcripture: they having the plain word, and full current of all the prophets from Moſes to Malachi, ſo far as they have ſpoken of the goſpel church, together with the New-Teſtament in *their* favour; whilſt for us, in this particular, nothing better can be alleged than the antiquated rite of circumciſion. If the Baptiſts be right, why not join them, and ſuffer ſmall inconveniences? If wrong, why not prove them ſo? It is pitiful that great and good men ſhould be dallying with inconcluſive arguments, when the time is long ſince come, that the *highway* of holineſs ſhould be ſo *plain*, that *wayfaring men*, though fools, ſhould not err therein.

5. We ſee why good men have been ſo divided among themſelves, as to infant baptiſm.

The reaſon is, they go without Chriſt in this matter. He is not divided.

Some baptize all. Others will baptize only the children in the houſeholds of communicants. Some baptize upon the half-way covenant. Some will baptize all who are under age. Again, others will baptize all under ſeven. Others ſtill will baptize upon the good promiſes of godfathers and godmothers. You will obſerve I uſe the word baptize in a ſenſe which I believe to be improper, but I would not offend you with a word,

when my meaning may be understood. But what propriety is there in all this inconsistency about the subjects of baptism? Does not the matter look as though there was no rule to go by, or as though none understood what it was?

6. We see why good men, when writing or speaking of baptism, are left to speak untruths.

It is doubtless because they will follow their own prejudices, and not the truth. Error hath divided them, and Christ is not with them in what they say. Some good men, not many, dare assert, in opposition to the Baptists, that there is not a word about immersion for baptism, in all the Bible. For *laymen* to say thus, is *presumption*, and for men of *learning* to make the assertion, is *almost unpardonable*. For they know, or ought to know, that the word to baptize, is not once mentioned in all the Bible but immersion is mentioned, unless they mean to play upon the word; and then it is a truth, when *baptizō* is mentioned immersion is, if they will give it its plain, literal English.

If the Baptists have the plain, literal and unequivocal sense of the scripture in their favour, is it not enough that they are despised and persecuted by the wicked of every class and not helped by any; but must we add to their affliction, by falsehood or equivocation? O prejudice! what wilt thou not do, even in a saint!

Besides, our good brethren, who are so warm against the Baptists, and will not allow them a word for their mode, do not agree together to inform us what the mode should be. One tells us, it is sprinkling, another says, pouring is the mode, a third contends for washing the face. a fourth is for putting water on the back of the neck, as the Swiss are said to do; whilst others affirm, that all these are right. Now, suppose the Baptists are wrong, who shall we say are in the right, or is there no right in this business? Does not all this look just as it would were there an error at the bottom? Hath the great Teacher who came from God, left matters thus at loose ends? Does the Bible thus differ, whilst pointing out the mode? No. Its language is pure and determinate.

7. It appears, that, in infant sprinkling for baptism, the intent of the institution is lost, and becomes no Christian ordinance at all.

Both the thing itself and the subjects of it are changed. It is quite a different thing from what the Institutor hath appointed. Neither this mode nor these subjects are known in the institution, nor in any passage of the Bible, where baptism is

mentioned. This mode is of man's device, and the subjects of it have, at best, but a traditional right. For good men to do thus, whilst they think it consistent with truth, appears to be a sin of ignorance; but if any do thus, while they know what the scriptures enjoin, their practice deserves a harder name.

8. It appears that dipping, immersion, or burying in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is baptism.

No man of real piety and solid learning ever doubted it. Whereas, sprinkling hath been doubted by many, denied continually by a large class of Christians, and been proved by none to have been ever appointed as the Christian ordinance of baptism.

9. We see, that every plea which hath been made, for a general or partial neglect of the scripture mode of baptism, is an indirect though unintentional charge of negligence, or want of benevolence, or of foresight, in the Divine Institutor. Let every man of candour and common sense examine this matter. Did not the Lord, who made our northern climes, know how cold they are?—Did he know them to be too cold for his disciples who might live in them, to be separated from the world by being visibly buried and raised again to join his kingdom? Why then did he not mention an exception in our favour, and not leave us to suffer this inconvenience, or be in perpetual uncertainty and continual dispute, to defend our, at best, but doubtful practice? Did he not perfectly know all the *compelling necessities* which Cyprian and others would, in their erring judgments, find to break over the bounds of the baptismal institution? Why then did he make no provision for these extreme cases? By doing this, he would have saved the Pedobaptists a world of anxiety, contention and censure. The fact appears to be, that our Lord intended, that the way of admission into his kingdom should be uniform, and that those who would not submit to it, should suffer the inconvenience of darkness, error and strife.

10. From what hath been said in the preceding discourses, is not the following a fair and undeniable conclusion? That I and other Pedobaptist ministers, so far as we have spoken a word against the Baptists, and especially that those, who have publickly warned their people to avoid the Baptists and flee from them, as from a dividing and dangerous heresy, have in this matter acted the part of the old Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites—who would not go into the kingdom of God themselves, and those who were entering, they hindered.

I by no means suppose that all who have done thus, are indeed hypocrites, save in this particular. No reasonable doubt can be entertained, but many of them are learned, pious, and very useful men; men, whom the Lord hath greatly honoured as labourers, in gathering in the harvest of souls. Many of these have been, in measure, bold, zealous and faithful, like Peter; yet when they dissemble, or teach and practise contrary from the truth, they are to be blamed; yes, they are, in this instance, worthy to be rebuked.

It would, indeed, be very injudicious in me to contend that all which the Baptists have said and done is justifiable. It would be equally injudicious to justify myself, or my brethren, where we have both said and done things contrary from the church and name of Jesus of Nazareth. It is time for both ministers and people to look to this matter, lest the Lord send leanness into our souls.

11. From a review of the whole subject, the following inference appears natural, and at the same time worthy of much consideration. The divinely constituted method by which any of the fallen race are to enter the kingdom of heaven below, remarkably sets to our view the way by which we are to commence perfect members of the kingdom of heaven above. Our obedience to the former is a practical declaration of our faith in the latter.

In joining Christ's kingdom on earth, we professedly die unto sin, go down to the grave, are buried, and rise, as from the dead. To join the kingdom of glory, we must actually experience what is but shadowed forth in baptism. We must die, be buried, or return to the dust, and rise from the dead.

How exactly doth our entrance into the church militant shadow forth our hoped for entrance into the church triumphant! It also appears that Christ hath directed, that the subjects of the one should be professedly, what the subjects of the other shall be actually, all saints.

How beautiful doth the church appear, so far as she observes the commands of her Lord, as to the members which she admits, and the manner of receiving them! She thus resembles Jerusalem, which is above, which is the mother of us all, if we be Christians. May the Lord direct our hearts into the love of the truth.

In the conclusion of the whole, it becomes us to add, to the truths delivered, what Christ Jesus added to my text: AMEN.

END OF THE SERMONS.

A MINIATURE HISTORY

OF THE

BAPTISTS.

IT may be pleasing to some of my readers to be presented with a brief account of the Baptists. I shall extract this account from the writings of those who were not of the Baptist denomination, but rather prejudiced against them.

Here it may be observed, that the religious sect, called Baptists, have caused the learned world more perplexity and research to decypher their origin, than any other sect of Christians, or, perhaps, than all others. Yes, this research hath baffled all their erudition in ancient story.

It is not difficult to fix the period when one sect of this denomination was first called Petrobrusians, when another was known by the name of Waterlandians, when a third was denominated Mennonites, &c. But the difficulty is this, to ascertain the time, place and medium, by which Christ's disciples were led to adopt the peculiar sentiment, which is now held by those called Baptists, and which distinguishes them from all other denominations.

It may be farther observed, that if no one, however learned and wise, be able to trace this sect to any beginning short of the days of the apostles, or of Christ, it is possible that it then arose. Besides, if all other religious denominations, or the Pedobaptists, who include all which are not Baptists, can be traced to a probable origin short of the apostles, and the Baptists cannot be, it affords still more probability, that they might have arisen then.

I wish my readers to indulge me in one question, and to give me an explicit answer. Are you willing to have the origin of the Baptists fairly explored, and to open your eyes to the light, should light be afforded?

You cannot, my Christian readers, unless your minds be unduly swayed by prejudice, do otherwise than say, Yes. For, though you be not very friendly to the Baptists, you will not deny them what you grant to your worst enemy, liberty to speak the truth, and that truth its weight, at least in measure.

It ought to be particularly noted, that my object is not to give the history of a name, but of a principle. I shall not con-

tend who were firſt called Baptiſts, Anabaptiſts, Mennonites, or the like; but who have held the peculiar ſentiment which is adopted by thoſe who are called Baptiſts. Wherever we find this principle, there we find the men, the Chriſtians, who, had they lived in our day, would be ſtyled Baptiſts. Nor is the preſent controverſy this, Whence came that *mode* of baptiſm, which is practiſed by all, who are known by the name Baptiſts? For this mode is granted, generally, if not univerſally, by all learned and honeſt men, to be as ancient as John the Baptiſt and the apoſtles. This mode is, indeed, not peculiar to the Baptiſts, for the Pedobaptiſts, for many centuries, practiſed this mode; and many of them do, to this day, practiſe immerſion.

The peculiar characteriſtic of the Baptiſts is this: They hold, that the ordinance of baptiſm is to be adminiſtered to adults or to viſible believers only.

One natural conſequence of this principle is, when any one who was baptized, or ſprinkled, in his infancy, comes over to the Baptiſts' ſentiment, they require him to be baptized. Hence they are called Anabaptiſts. Another very natural conſequence is, this ſentiment conſtrains the Baptiſts to oppoſe the baptiſm of infants. Hence they are diſtinguiſhed by the name of Antipedobaptiſts.

I ſhall add one obſervation more, and then proceed to give you a ſuccinct hiſtory of the Baptiſts. The obſervation is this: Whenever and wherever I find perſons, who hold the peculiar characteriſtic ſentiment of the Baptiſts, I ſhall call them by that name. Their hiſtory now follows.

I. The origin of the Baptiſts can be found no where, unleſs it be conceded that it was at Jordan, or Enon.

Dr. Moſheim, in his hiſtory of the Baptiſts, ſays, "The *true origin* of that ſect, which acquired the denomination of the Anabaptiſts by their adminiſtering anew the rite of baptiſm to thoſe who come over to their communion, and derived that of Mennonites from the famous man to whom they owe the greateſt part of their preſent felicity, is *hid* in the *remote depths* of *antiquity*, and is of conſequence extremely difficult to be aſcertained."

Here Dr. Moſheim, as learned an hiſtorian, though not ſo candid a one, as the ſcience of letters can boaſt, bears poſitive teſtimony, that the origin of the Baptiſts is hidden in the *remote depths* of *antiquity*. Nothing is more evident than this; the Doctor either knew not their origin, or was not candid enough to confeſs it. At leaſt, we have this concluſion, that he could find their origin no where ſhort of the apoſtles.

II. A large number of the Baptists were scattered, oppressed, and persecuted, through many, if not through all, the nations of Europe, before the dawn of the reformation under Luther and Calvin. When Luther, seconded by several princes of the petty states of Germany, arose in opposition to the overgrown usurpations of the church of Rome, the Baptists also arose from their hiding places. They hoped that what they had been long expecting and praying for was now at the door; the time in which the sufferings of God's people should be greatly terminated: but God had not raised Luther's views of reformation to nigh the height the Baptists were expecting. Their detestation of the Mother of Harlots, owing to their bitter experience of her cruelties, and the clear gospel light with which they had been favoured above Luther, and their ardent desire to be utterly delivered from her cruel oppressions, made them wish to carry the reformation farther than God had appointed Luther to accomplish. They were soon disappointed in Luther, and probably did not duly appreciate the reformation which he was instrumentally effecting. It was as might have been expected; the Lutherans and the Baptists fell out by the way; and Calvin, if not Luther, warmly opposed them. *See Mosheim. Cent.* XVI. *Chap.* iii. *Sect.* 3. *Part* 2.

Mosheim, vol. IV. page 427, speaking of the Baptists, says, "This sect started up all of a sudden, in several countries, at the same point of time, and at the very period when the first contests of the reformers with the Roman Pontiffs drew the attention of the world."

From this we have one plain and fair deduction; that the Baptists were before the reformation under Luther and Calvin, and therefore did not take their rise from the enthusiasts under Munzer and Storck, or at that time; or at Munster.

III. The Hussites, in the fifteenth century, the Wickliffites, in the fourteenth, and the Petrobrusians, in the twelfth, and the Waldenses, were all Baptists.* To this fact Dr. Mosheim bears the following testimony.† "It may be observed that the Mennonites (i. e. the Baptists of East and West Friesland, Holland, Gelderland, Brabant, Westphalia, and other places in the North of Europe) are *not entirely mistaken*, when they boast their descent from the Waldenses, Petrobrusians, and other *ancient* sects, who are usually considered as *witnesses* of the *truth* in times of

* Not all, every one; but all, generally.

† *Vol.* IV. pp. 428, 429.

univerſal darkneſs and ſuperſtition. Before the riſe of Luther and Calvin, there lay *concealed* in *almoſt all* the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland and Germany, many perſons, who adhered tenaciouſly to the following doctrine, which the Waldenſes, Wickliffites and Huſſites had maintained; ſome in a more diſguiſed and others in a more open and public manner, viz. *That the kingdom of Chriſt, or the viſible church he had eſtabliſhed upon earth, was an aſſembly of true and real ſaints, and ought therefore to be inacceſſible to the wicked and unrighteous, and alſo exempt from all thoſe inſtitutions which human prudence ſuggeſts to oppoſe the progreſs of iniquity, or to correct and reform tranſgreſſors.* This maxim is the true ſource of all the peculiarities, that are to be found in the religious doctrine and diſcipline of the Mennonites, (or Baptiſts in the North of Europe) and it is moſt certain that the *greateſt part* of theſe *peculiarities* were approved of by many of thoſe who, before the dawn of the reformation, entertained the notion already mentioned relating to the viſible church of Chriſt."

From this teſtimony of Dr. Moſheim we may remark—

1. That the Mennonites were Baptiſts, or Anabaptiſts, for theſe different names he uſes to expreſs one and the ſame thing.

2. That the Petrobruſians were Baptiſts; for the Baptiſts aſſert, and Moſheim allows it, that they were their progenitors in principle and practice. Beſides, in his hiſtory of the twelfth century, part II. chap. v. ſect. 7, he expreſsly tells us, that one of their tenets was, *that no perſons whatſoever were to be baptized before they were come to the full uſe of their reaſon.*

3. That the Waldenſes, Wickliffites and Huſſites were Baptiſts; for, as Moſheim ſays, they all held to the great and leading maxim, which is the true ſource of all the peculiarities that are to be found in the religious doctrine and diſcipline of the Mennonites. Theſe ſeveral denominations of Chriſtians were not known by the ancient, modern and appropriate name, Baptiſts. But their doctrine and diſcipline were the ſame with our Baptiſts, and were they now living, they would be thus called. In other words; juſt ſo far as they were conſiſtent with their great and leading *maxim*, and juſt ſo far as the modern Baptiſts are conſiſtent with *their* great and leading maxim, juſt ſo far theſe ancient and modern Baptiſts are alike the one to the other.

4. That in the ſixteenth century the Waldenſes, Petrobruſians and other ancient ſects (i. e. of the Baptiſts) were uſually conſidered as having been witneſſes of the truth, in the times of

darkneſs and univerſal ſuperſtition. How differently from this would and do many conſider them in our day!

5. That before the riſe of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed in almoſt all the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland and Germany, many perſons who held the ſame doctrine and diſcipline with the Baptiſts in our day, and were, of neceſſary and fair conſequence, of the ſame denomination.

IV. We have already traced the Baptiſts down to the twelfth century. We have alſo found that they were ſcattered over almoſt all the countries of Europe, and were, in the dark ages of popery, the witneſſes of the truth; or have been uſually thus conſidered. Beſides, we have found that the Waldenſes were, in principle and practice, Baptiſts; or in other words, we have found that the Waldenſes were Baptiſts. We will now ſee to what origin we can trace the Waldenſes.

Dr. Maclaine, who tranſlated Moſheim's church hiſtory from the original Latin, gives us, vol. III. pages 118, 119, under note G, the following hiſtory of the Waldenſes. His words are, "We may venture to affirm the contrary (i. e. from what Moſheim had juſt ſaid of the Waldenſes taking their name from Peter Waldus) with Beza and other writers of note; for it ſeems evident, from the beſt records, that Valdus derived his name from the true Valdenſes of Piedmont, whoſe doctrine he adopted, and who were known by the name of Vaudois and Valdenſes, before he or his immediate followers exiſted. If the Valdenſes, or Waldenſes, had derived their name from any eminent teacher, it would probably have been from Valdo, who was remarkable for the purity of his doctrine, in the ninth century, and was the cotemporary and chief counſellor of Berengarius. But the truth is, that they derive their name from their vallies in Piedmont, which in their language are called Vaux. Hence Vaudois, their true name; Hence Peter, (or, as others call him, John) of Lyons, was called in Latin Valdus, becauſe he had adopted their doctrine; and hence the term Valdenſes and Waldenſes, uſed by thoſe who write in Engliſh, or Latin, in the place of Vaudois. The bloody Inquiſitor Reinerus Sacco, who exerted ſuch a furious zeal for the deſtruction of the Waldenſes, lived but about eighty years after Valdus of Lyons, and muſt therefore be ſuppoſed to know whether or not he was the real founder of the Valdenſes, or Leoniſts; and yet it is remarkable, that he ſpeaks of the Leoniſts as a ſect that had flouriſhed about five hundred years; nay,

mentions authors of note, who make their antiquity remount to the apoſtolic age. *See the account given of Sacco's book by the Jeſuit Gretſer in the* Bibliotheca Patrum. I know not upon what principle Dr. Moſheim maintains that the inhabitants of the vallies of Piedmont are to be carefully diſtinguiſhed from the Waldenſes; and I am perſuaded that whoever will be at the pains to read attentively the 2d, 25th, 26th, and 27th chapters of the firſt book of Leger's Hiſtorie des Egliſes Vaudoiſes, will find this diſtinction entirely groundleſs.—When the Papiſts aſks us where our religion was before Luther, we generally anſwer, in the Bible, and we anſwer well. But to gratify their taſte for tradition, and human authority, we may add to this anſwer—and in the vallies of Piedmont.

To the above we may add, one of the Popiſh writers, ſpeaking of the Waldenſes, ſays, "*The hereſy of the Waldenſes is the oldeſt hereſy in the world.*"*

It is here worthy to be particularly noticed—

1. That Reinerus Sacco ſpeaks of the Waldenſes, or Baptiſts, of his day, as a ſect that had, at that time, flouriſhed for about five hundred years; which brings the hiſtory of the Baptiſts, as a religious ſect, down to the fifth century.

2. That this ſame Reinerus Sacco mentions authors of note, who make the antiquity of the Waldenſean Baptiſts to remount to the apoſtolic age.

3. That the Baptiſts are the moſt ancient of all the religious ſects, who have ſet themſelves to oppoſe the ghoſtly powers of the Romaniſts.

4. That if there be any body of Chriſtians, who have exiſted during the reign of antichriſt, or of the man of ſin, the Baptiſts have been this living church of Jeſus Chriſt.

5. The conſequence of the whole is this: The Baptiſts have no origin ſhort of the Apoſtles. They aroſe in the days of John the Baptiſt, and increaſed largely in the days of our bleſſed Saviour, when he ſhowed himſelf unto Iſrael, and in the days of his Apoſtles, and have exiſted, under the ſevereſt oppreſſions, with intervals of proſperity, ever ſince.

But as to the Pedobaptiſts, their origin is at once traced to about the middle of the ſecond century; when the myſtery of iniquity not only began to work, but, by its fermentation, had produced this error of fruitful evils, namely, that baptiſm was eſſential to ſalvation: yes, that it was regeneration. Hence aroſe the neceſſity of baptizing children. Now comes forward

* Preſident Edwards's Hiſt. of Redemption, p. 267.

Irenæus, and informs that the church had a *tradition* from the Apoſtles to give baptiſm to infants. We are told in the Appendix to Moſheim's Church Hiſtory, that one of the remarkable things which took place in the ſecond century was the baptizing of infants, it being never known before, as a Chriſtian ordinance for them.

What a pity it is, that good men, who have renounced the error, which was, as church hiſtory informs us, the progenitor of infant baptiſm, ſhould ſtill retain its practical and erroneous offspring, to the prejudice and marring of the church of God! Not a ſingle ſect of the Pedobaptiſts can find its origin nearer to the Apoſtles than the ſecond century. We hence conclude, that their origin was there, and that they then and there aroſe in the myſtery which was then working. May the Father of lights open the eyes of my brethren, that they may come out of this, perhaps, the laſt thicket of groſs error and darkneſs.

I will now add—

V. The teſtimony which Preſident Edwards bears in favour of the Waldenſes and other faithful ones, who were ſcattered through all parts of Europe in the dark ages of Popery. It is the following:

"In every age of this dark time, there appeared particular perſons in all parts of Chriſtendom, who bore a teſtimony againſt the corruptions and tyranny of the church of Rome. There is no one age of antichriſt, even in the darkeſt time of all, but eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians mention a great many by name, who manifeſted an abhorrence of the Pope and his idolatrous worſhip, and plead for the ancient purity of doctrine and worſhip. God was pleaſed to maintain an uninterrupted ſucceſſion of witneſſes, through the whole time, in Germany, France, Britain, and other countries, as hiſtorians demonſtrate, and mention them by name, and give an account of the teſtimony which they held. Many of them were private perſons, and many of them miniſters, and ſome magiſtrates and perſons of great diſtinction. And there were numbers in every age, who were perſecuted and put to death for this teſtimony.

"Beſides theſe particular perſons, diſperſed here and there, there was a certain people, called the Waldenſes, who lived ſeparate from all the reſt of the world, who kept themſelves pure, and conſtantly bore a teſtimony againſt the church of Rome, through all this dark time. The place where they dwelt was the Vaudois, or the five vallies of Piedmont, a very mountainous country, between Italy and France. The place where they lived was compaſſed with thoſe exceeding high mountains, call-

ed the Alps, which were almoſt impaſſable. The paſſage over theſe mountainous, deſert countries, was ſo difficult, that the vallies where this people dwelt were almoſt inacceſſible. There this people lived for many ages, as it were alone, where, in a ſtate of ſeparation from all the world, having very little to do with any other people, they ſerved God in the ancient purity of his worſhip, and never ſubmitted to the church of Rome. This place, in this deſert, mountainous country, probably was the place, eſpecially meant in the 12th chap. of Rev. 6th verſe, as the place prepared of God for the woman, that they ſhould feed her there during the reign of Antichriſt.

"Some of the Popiſh writers themſelves own that that people never ſubmitted to the church of Rome. One of the Popiſh writers, ſpeaking of the Waldenſes, ſays, the hereſy of the Waldenſes is the oldeſt hereſy in the world. It is ſuppoſed, that this people firſt betook themſelves to this deſert, ſecret place among the mountains, to hide themſelves from the ſeverity of the heathen perſecutions, which were before Conſtantine the Great; and thus the woman fled into the wilderneſs from the face of the ſerpent, *Rev.* xii. 6; and ſo verſe 14, And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that ſhe might fly into the wilderneſs into her place, where ſhe is nouriſhed for a time and times and half a time from the face of the ſerpent. And the people being ſettled there, their poſterity continued there from age to age afterwards, and being as it were by natural walls, as well as by God's grace, ſeparated from the reſt of the world, never partook of the overflowing corruption."

It is hoped that the reader will very carefully and candidly compare what is teſtified to us by three very learned men, Dr. Moſheim, Dr. Maclaine, and Preſident Edwards. The teſtimony of the firſt is, that the Waldenſes and many others who are *uſually conſidered as witneſſes of the truth* in the times of *univerſal darkneſs* and *ſuperſtition*, were eſſentially agreed with the Baptiſts of modern date, as to *principle* and *practice*, or as to the great maxim, whence flow all the peculiarities of that denomination. His teſtimony, in ſhort, is this: the Huſſites, the Wickliffites, the Petrobruſians, and the Waldenſes, with other witneſſes of the truth, ſcattered over Europe, in the dark ages of Popery, were eſſentially the ſame with the Baptiſts of later times; or that they all were what we call Baptiſts.

Dr. Maclaine teſtifies that the Waldenſes flouriſhed as early as the fifth century; yes, he informs us that ſome authors of note carry their antiquity up to the apoſtolic age.

Preſident Edwards informs us that theſe Waldenſes were the main body of the church in the dark ages, and have been, together with their ſcattered brethren, the pure church of Jeſus Chriſt, during the reign of Antichriſt, and, of certain conſequence, were ſucceſſors of the pure church, from the days of Chriſt and his apoſtles.

The fair conſequence of all is this, that the Baptiſts have been the uninterrupted church of our Lord from the apoſtles' day to ours.

I may, indeed, exclaim, What have I been believing, what have I been doing, with reſpect to the Baptiſts, all my days?

I know, and I confeſs, that the hiſtory of the church aſſures me, that the denomination of Chriſtians to which I have belonged, and to which I do ſtill viſibly belong, came through the church of Rome, and was broken off from the mother of harlots, and it is not greatly to be wondered at, if all her filth ſhould not be yet wiped away. At the ſame time, the ſame hiſtory aſſures me, that the Baptiſts never have ſubmitted to her ſuperſtitions and filthy abominations.

I am ſomewhat ſurpriſed at my own long continued ignorance, and at the yet remaining darkneſs of my brethren, as to this matter. But above all, what ſhall I ſay, at the hard oppoſition which ſome good men yet maintain againſt their brethren, the Baptiſts? Surely they might with great propriety be addreſſed in the words of Gamaliel: "Take heed to yourſelves what ye intend to do, as touching theſe men." If ye will not favour them, "refrain from them, and let them alone; for if their counſel or work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; leſt haply ye be found even to fight againſt God."

All the power, craft, and cruelty of the wicked, though practiſed for nighly one thouſand eight hundred years, have not been able to prevail againſt them. Surely the miſguided zeal of good men will not.

In this ſhort Hiſtory of the Baptiſts, we ſee the continued accompliſhment of one of Chriſt's promiſſory predictions, which is, *Matt.* xvi. 18. The gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt the church. That denomination of Chriſtians which are called Baptiſts, are the only known ſociety of profeſſing Chriſtians, againſt which Satan hath not prevailed, either in point of doctrine, or diſcipline, or both. This church, or old and inveterate hereſy, as Satan would call it, he acknowledges,

by the mouth of his ſervants, the Romaniſts, that he could never ſubdue. It is true, Satan hath joined many of his legions to it, as he did many falſe brethren to the diſciples in the days of the apoſtles. But he hath never, no, not for an hour, prevailed upon this ancient and primitive church to give up the doctrines of grace, or the adminiſtrations of the ordinances as Chriſt delivered them to his people. That which ſhe firſt received, ſhe ſtill holds faſt, and will. In all the hiſtory of the church, we read of no other body of profeſſing Chriſtians, after which Satan hath caſt ſuch a continual flood of waters; but hitherto the earth hath helped the woman, and the flood of perſecution hath not prevailed. Satan's future efforts will be equally without effect.

My Fathers and Brethren in the miniſtry, and my brethren among the profeſſed diſciples of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſuffer a word of exhortation.

If you will not take up the croſs, and ſo increaſe the number of Chriſt's continually preſerved, yet always ſuffering, little flock, be ye careful how ye ſet yourſelves in array againſt them; for more are they who are for them, than are thoſe who are againſt them. With you is an arm of fleſh, in all your oppoſitions, but with them is the Lord their God to help them, and he will help them; and by and by he will help them right early.

I ſhall be very pleaſingly diſappointed, ſhould I not be, by many of you who are rulers in Iſrael, ſet at nought, for coming over to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty. But, if I may but know the truth, and pleaſe the Lord, it is, with me, but a comparatively ſmall thing to be judged of you, or of man's judgment. I do, indeed, wiſh for the continuance of your good opinion and friendſhip, but I cannot poſſeſs them at the expenſe of truth. That I might teſtify unto you theſe things, I have riſked every thing which the world calls valuable. I am now determined, and through the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt I hope that to the end of my life I ſhall be determined, to venture every thing in defence of the doctrines and ordinances and church of the Son of God. I beſeech all of you, who know the grace of our Lord Jeſus, that ye do not as did many of the chief rulers in Iſrael. They believed on Chriſt, but did not confeſs him, becauſe of the Phariſees, leſt they ſhould be put out of the ſynagogue; for they loved the praiſe of men, more than the praiſe of God. *John* xii. 42, 43.

You have now heard me, and know what I do. You will therefore now make up your judgment. But I pray you, remember one thing: With what judgment ye judge, ye ſhall be judged.

I am, Reader,

Thy Servant, for the Goſpel's ſake,

DANIEL MERRILL.

Extract from the Baptiſt Miſſionary Magazine, No. 4.

Account of the Baptiſt Church lately conſtituted at Sedgwick, Diſtrict of Maine.

THE Rev. Daniel Merrill graduated at Dartmouth College, 1789, was ordained over the Congregational Church in Sedgwick, in September, 1793. His labours have been very much bleſſed among his people, who have experienced ſeveral precious ſeaſons of revival under his miniſtry, particularly in the years 1798, and 1801.

Several circumſtances occurred to lead Mr. Merrill, in the courſe of the laſt year, to review, with more critical attention, the grounds on which he had practiſed *infant baptiſm*. The reſult of his inquiries may be learned from the preceding Sermons on Baptiſm, and from the following account of his baptiſm, &c.

At a meeting of the church (or covenanted brethren) Feb. 28, 1805, they voted unanimouſly to ſend for a Council of Baptiſt miniſters to come and aſſiſt them in the following particulars, viz. 1ſt. To adminiſter Chriſtian baptiſm to them; 2d. To conſtitute them into a church upon the primitive Baptiſt platform; 3d. To ſet over them in the Lord the Rev. Daniel Merrill, to be their miniſter.

Agreeably to their requeſt, Meſſrs. Pitman of Providence, Baldwin of Boſton, and Williams of Beverly, accompanied by a number of brethren, took paſſage at Salem, at 8 o'clock on Thurſday evening the 9th day of May, inſtant, and arrived at Sedgwick the Saturday following, at one, P. M. Lord's-day, half paſt 10 o'clock, Mr. Pitman preached from Acts v. 20. After an intermiſſion of half an hour, Mr. Baldwin preached from 1 Cor. iii. 9. After another intermiſſion of a few minutes, Mr. Williams addreſſed the people again from Proverbs xxv. 25. At 6, Mr. Baldwin preached again from Solomon's Song, i. 8.

Monday, May 12, at 2, P. M. the Council formed, and then adjourned until the next day. At 3, aſſembled in the Meeting-houſe, and Mr. Williams preached from John xiv. 21. After which proceeded to an examination of the candidates for baptiſm, until the day was ſpent.

Tueſday, 13th, examined a number more candidates. At half paſt 10, Mr. Williams preached particularly on the inſtitution, from Acts ii. 41. Immediately after, we repaired to

the water's ſide. The place fixed upon for the adminiſtration of this ſolemn ordinance was in the tide waters of Benjamin's River, about one mile from the ſea. A more beautiful or convenient place is ſcarcely to be imagined.

The land adjoining was ſufficiently elevated to accommodate ſpectators with the beſt poſſible proſpect; and yet ſloping ſo gently to the margin of the river, that thoſe at the fartheſt diſtance might ſee as plainly as thoſe who ſtood nigheſt.

As ſoon as the people were aſſembled at the water's ſide, ſolemn prayer was offered up to that God whoſe ordinance we were going to attend. A profound ſilence reigned through the aſſembly, when Mr. Baldwin took Mr. Merrill by the hand, and walking ſlowly into the water, repeated theſe words, *And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him.* When they had gotten to a ſuitable depth, the ordinance was performed. Mr. Merrill, riſing from the watery grave with a very pleaſant, ſmiling countenance, could not refrain expreſſing the heart-felt ſatisfaction he enjoyed in this act of obedience. As they aſcended out of the water, Mr. Williams went down with Mrs. Merrill, repeating theſe words, *And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs.* In this way the baptizing was conducted, until all the candidates preſent were baptized. Here, we beheld ſixty-ſix perſons buried in baptiſm by theſe two adminiſtrators, in forty-two minutes! The candidates, both females as well as males, deſcended into the water with the greateſt calmneſs imaginable; and in general, they came out of it rejoicing in ſuch a manner as we have ſeldom ſeen. Numbers of them could not refrain giving glory to God our Saviour, who by his own example marked out this humble, bleſſed way. The ſpectators behaved with the utmoſt propriety. They were not only ſolemn, but many of them were in tears. A heart muſt be adamant not to have ſoftened at ſuch a moving ſcene. The ſervice was concluded by prayer and ſinging.

At 5 o'clock the people aſſembled again at the Meeting-houſe, and Mr. Pitman preached to them from John xii. 26.

Wedneſday morning the Council met and arranged the buſineſs of the afternoon. Then examined and baptized nineteen candidates more, in the ſame place and manner as deſcribed above. At 1 o'clock aſſembled again in the Meeting-houſe; when the baptized members, having, as we hope, firſt given themſelves to the Lord, now gave themſelves to one

another by the will of God. After thus covenanting with each other, the Rev. Mr. Case, by the appointment of the Council, addressed them in a few words, and gave the right hand to them, in token of our fellowship with them as a sister church of Christ; and by solemn prayer, *commended them to God and the word of his grace, which is able to build them up, and give them an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.*

The Council immediately proceeded to ordain Mr. Merrill. ——Mr. Baldwin introduced the solemnity by prayer; and then addressed the people in a well-adapted and very impressive discourse, founded on part of the 3d verse of the epistle of Jude: *Earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.* The ordaining prayer was made by the Rev. Elisha Snow of Thomastown; the charge, by the Rev. Abraham Cummings of Vinal-Haven; the right hand of fellowship, by the Rev. Elisha Williams of Beverly; and the concluding prayer, by the Rev. John Pitman of Providence.

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OF

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OF THE

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PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC.

BY DANIEL MERRILL,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN SEDGWICK.

And in the days of theſe kings ſhall the God of heaven ſet up a kingdom, which ſhall never be deſtroyed: and the kingdom ſhall not be left to other people, but it ſhall break in pieces and conſume all theſe kingdoms, and it ſhall ſtand forever. *Daniel.*

Another parable ſpake he unto them, The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three meaſures of meal, till the whole was leavened. *Jeſus Chriſt.*

Buy the *truth*, and ſell it not. *Solomon.*

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1807.

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WILLIAM S. SHAW, *Clerk of the Diſtrict of Maſſachuſetts.*

To the Reader.

DEAR FRIEND,

TO the careleſs ſinner, and to the indolent and erroneous ſaint, I appear a fool; and the preſent controverſy, eſpecially on my ſide, to be needleſs and without profit. But it will be ſoon known, that more is depending on it than are all the treaſures of the Indies, or than the pleaſures of time. It has been Satan's ſubtilty, from the beginning, to lead men from God's inſtitutions. A compliance with this ſubtilty was the ſin of our firſt parents, and ruined our race. A compliance with this provoked God to caſt the ten tribes as out of his ſight. A neglect of the Lord's ordinances carried the Jews into the Babyloniſh captivity for ſeventy years. For the ſame profanation of the Lord's ordinances, they are now a taunt, a bye-word, and a curſe, among all nations. A compliance with the ſame device of Satan produced Antichriſt, and ſtill upholds him.

The devil is the ſame deceiver now that he was nearly ſix thouſand years ago. He then repreſented ſin as a pleaſant thing, and the way to wiſdom. Juſt ſo now. Thoſe, who in any and every age have conſidered the poſitive inſtitutions of the Lord to be of very ſacred importance, have been called by perhaps every name which the malice of Satan could invent. Theſe ill names and reproaches are ſtill the lot of ſuch as keep the ordinances as Chriſt delivered them. What falſehoods have been wickedly circulated againſt the Author of theſe pages! How many, from whom we might have expected better things, have ſaid, Report, and we will report it!

Kind reader, I know but one thing which the public can lay to my charge, and it is this:—I am jealous for the honour of Jeſus, the King of the Gentiles as well as Jews. I plead for obedience to his inſtitutions and ordinances. I plead againſt thoſe who would and do corrupt them. I plead againſt the prieſt and people who diſobey my King. I plead with argu-

ments so plain, that a child may understand. I plead the plain word, the open word, the unadulterated word of God, as my defence. I have injured no man in this matter, otherwise than I have charged guilt upon the corrupters of God's word. My opponents despise me, but the Lord will rebuke them. It is his cause which I defend. He will one day plead my cause, and put my enemies to shame. I have, and do still, willingly bear reproach for Jesus' sake. I heartily commiserate the case of those who are on the opposite side. I see their end coming: it may not be far off.

Reader, Israel's despising Elijah did not save them; Judah's setting Jeremiah at nought did not save them; nor will it avail the opposers to set at nought the baptized church, with their leaders.

Reader, if I be a real Christian, I am a real Baptist, and the Lord hath made me both. If I be a Christian, then in the sincerity of my heart, I beseech thee to inquire for the order of Christ's house, as for thy life, for it is for thy life; for others will soon receive of the plagues of Antichrist. When you shall see, in the following pages, with what false arguments, mistakes, and errors, Mr. A. hath laboured to defend his side, I pray thee ask thyself this question,—Can the cause of truth thus labour, and need such means of defence, in the hands of an able disputant? The reason why Mr. A. hath so committed himself, is not because he is unable to argue well in a good cause, but on account of his having undertaken to defend a bad one.

I now commit the matter to God and to the reader's best judgment, praying the Father of Lights to send forth light and truth, and speedily subdue the world unto himself.

With good will to all men,

I am the reader's friend,

THE AUTHOR.

SEDGWICK, AUGUST 11, 1806.

Second Expoſition, &c.

We appeal to the Bible, to ſtubborn facts, and to common ſenſe.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS,

MY public writings are ſtill attended with a ſeries of pain and pleaſure. It is painful to me to contradict men of education, talents, and reſpectability, and to be contradicted by them, as has been the caſe, and probably will be for the preſent. But it is pleaſing, that God, who ſeparated me from my mother's womb, hath called me, not only to the knowledge of his word generally, but to know the order of his houſe, and to defend it.

I am very little diſappointed at the reception which my writings receive: for when God taught me to diſcover the blindneſs and errors in which I and my brethren were, I ſaw directly that my repentance and reformation would bring an army of oppoſers: for the moment in which I condemned myſelf, I condemned them; and when I forſook my evil practices, I practically condemned thoſe who continued in them.

My Lord and Maſter was called Beelzebub, and his firſt apoſtles were ſaid to be mad. I calculated to partake of ſome of the ſame kind of uſage. That many of the wicked oppoſe me, is not ſtrange; that hypocritical ſcribes and phariſees oppoſe me, is no cauſe of wonder; that good men, who have not light and reſolution ſufficient to renounce their educational prejudices, ſhould oppoſe me, is nothing more than might have been expected, nor is this different from what was expected; but that good men

ſhould uſe the artillery of the wicked, and defend their errors by ſophiſtry, and I might almoſt ſay by deception, is not what I ſo fully expected as I find to be true. Nor was I fully appriſed, that good men would treat me with all that contempt with which the men of Succoth did Gideon, and Nabal the ſervants of David. But I find ſome are diſpoſed much the ſame way. I have no diſpoſition to teach them, with the thorns and briars of the wilderneſs, nor with the ſword of ſteel: but I truſt in the God of Iſrael, that the day is not far off, when they ſhall be taught by the ſword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; and when they ſhall be willing to hear, and ſhall treat with more reſpect and much leſs rudeneſs, ſuch as would inſtruct them.

Mr. Samuel Auſtin I conſider to be one of theſe good men. He is impatient of contradiction, and has informed the world that he hath cloſed his public correſpondence with me; yet my pen muſt expoſe his errors, and the public muſt hear it. At the ſame time, I pray the Lord that not a ſentence may eſcape my pen, which ſhall give either him or his brethren needleſs pain. It is alſo my deſire, that I may never withhold a truth which the cauſe of Chriſt ſhall require me to make public. It is truth, plain truth, on which I depend, for the ſupport of Chriſt's cauſe; which I hope is my cauſe. I ſhall not ridicule Mr. A., nor ſhall I attempt to deſpiſe him, or ſpare him out of *pity*;* nor do I aſk him ever to ſpare me again, becauſe he ſo pities my weakneſs that he will not fully *expoſe the nakedneſs of the land.* I aſk no favour, in this way, from Mr. A., nor from any other man. Let truth be defended, let truth be thoroughly defended, though I appear a fool.

I can with ſome degree of ſincerity ſay, I pity Mr. A.; yet I pity the ſuffering cauſe of truth more. It is my ſettled judgment, that he thinketh himſelf to be doing God ſervice, in his oppoſition to the cauſe of the Son of God. It will, no doubt, wound his feelings, when I ſhall prove him guilty of ſophiſtry, and miſtakes, and miſrepreſentations, in his zealous labours for the cauſe of error; but I muſt conſider his feelings as he alſo may ſoon conſider them, of very little worth, when they are to be wounded or truth given up.

I ſhall not mention every miſtake and error which are found in his Letters; but ſhall endeavour to give ſuch an account of them generally, that the reader may not, unleſs

* See Mr. Auſtin's Letters, p. 20, 4, 3.

he loves darkneſs rather than light, be ſtumbled in them. It might not be neceſſary to make any reply, were it not that in his title page he promiſed to do ſomething, and ſome of his readers might take it for granted that he had, unleſs his falſe arguments, his weak arguments, his miſtakes, miſrepreſentations, &c. were expoſed. This I ſhall now do. But previouſly, it may be well to note, that Mr. A. is on the retreat; for he concedes,

1. That ſprinkling is not baptiſm; or, that he is unable to prove it to be ſo. His words are, page 8, "Neither have I ſaid that ſprinkling is baptiſm. Here, again, is unfairneſs. Where is quotation?" I will furniſh him with more than one. Says Mr. A. in his firſt pamphlet to me, page 46, "Why may it (external baptiſm) not as well be by affuſion or *ſprinkling?*" Again, page 100, ſays he, "We deny that immerſion is any more baptiſm than *ſprinkling* or pouring." My obſervation upon this is, When a good man hath repeatedly advocated a certain tenet, and afterwards, when charged with it, denies his having ſpoken in its favour, he muſt have forgotten it; and if he be honeſt, he muſt be diſpoſed to relinquiſh it, when he charges his opponent with unfairneſs for placing it to his account.

2. He concedes, that pædobaptiſm hath no martyrs to witneſs for it. Page 15, he ſays, "By confeſſors, you mean ſuch as have ſuffered martyrdom for the doctrine of pædobaptiſm. I never pretended we had any. What the reaſons are that we have none, I may not be able to aſſign." The reaſons are very plain. Pædobaptiſm was appointed by men, not by the Lord; and it was appointed for men, not for the Lord; for worldly, ſuperſtitious men too, and for ſuperſtitious purpoſes. Theſe are reaſons enough why God never ſuffered any of his friends to die in the defence of it.

The public ſhall now be preſented with a few ſamples of Mr. A.'s falſe argumentations or ſophiſms.

1. Says he, pages 10, 11, "*Peter*, influenced by his *carnal prejudices*, thought he muſt by no means come unto one of another nation, becauſe they were not of the circumciſion; but it was told him, What God hath cleanſed that call not thou common. The character of Cornelius, if we are to be governed by the deciſion of God, was a full warrant for Peter to hold communion with him; and it would ſeem, though he had this ground only for it, he having not yet been baptized, had he refuſed he would have withſtood God: for he ſays, 'Foraſmuch then, as God

gave them the like gift that he did unto us, what was I that I could withſtand God.' So it is apprehended, that the allowed fact, that God hath cleanſed this multitude of pious perſons (juſt mentioned) and ſealed them as his, with the like gift of the Holy Ghoſt which he hath beſtowed on you, obliges you not to treat them as common or unclean."

Mr. A.'s argument, in plain Engliſh, is this:—Peter would have withſtood God, had he not have had communion with the devout Cornelius, who had received the Holy Ghoſt; and had he not baptized him, ſeeing he received the word gladly, and was a qualified ſubject for the ordinance. Therefore, and what? This, *The Baptiſts withſtand God, by refuſing to commune at the Lord's table with thoſe who are not baptized.* This is one of the firſt rate of ſophiſms. Peter would have withſtood God, had he refuſed to have baptized believing Cornelius; therefore, the baptized church withſtand God, becauſe they refuſe to commune with unbaptized perſons. Peter's commiſſion and orders were to baptize thoſe who believed, therefore he would have withſtood God had he refuſed. The Baptiſts have no commiſſion, order, or liberty from God, to commune at the Lord's table with any till they are baptized, *yet they withſtand God if they refuſe.* Into what abſurdity do Mr. A.'s errors drive him! But ſays he, "Pious perſons having received the like gift of the Holy Ghoſt, obliges the Baptiſts not to treat them as common or unclean." Certainly, and we do not. We ſpeak unto them the good word of the Lord, and invite them to forſake the papiſtical errors of ſprinkling and infant baptiſm; and when they, Cornelius like, will hear whatſoever the Lord ſaith unto them, we gladly commune with them in both the ordinances, and in God's appointed way too; firſt in baptiſm, then in the ſupper.

2. The next falſe argument or ſophiſm of his which I ſhall mention, is the anſwer to the queſtion which I put to him, in the words following:—Suppoſe there be a reformation at this preſent time in Worceſter, where you reſide. Suppoſe fifty perſons of the brighteſt talents be converted. Not one of them has been baptized, or even ſo much as ſprinkled. I providentially ride through the town next week; by chance I meet Mr. A. in the ſtreet, and put this queſtion—Have thoſe very reſpectable characters, who have of late been hopefully converted, joined the church (meaning the viſible church)? The ſophiſtry is in his anſwer, page 14. His anſwer is, "Yes. What! become converted to Chriſt, and yet not join his kingdom?" Here

he tells me and the public that his anſwer is yes; whereas, if I can underſtand any thing by what he ſays, he has given no anſwer to the queſtion, but has anſwered another, which I put not. The queſtion propoſed was, Have theſe converted unbaptized perſons joined the church, the viſible church? Yes, ſays Mr. A. they have joined Chriſt's kingdom. Yes; but this is not the queſtion. The queſtion is, Have they joined the viſible church of Chriſt? Yes, ſays he, they have joined his kingdom. If I comprehend Mr. A. this is theer ſophiſtry and evaſion, and manifeſts that the place is too ſtrait for him. If they have joined the viſible church, why do he and his brethren converſe with them, in order to their joining? Have Mr. A. and his brethren been idling with all the perſons whom they have profeſſedly admitted into the viſible church? and does he ſuppoſe that his brethren, through the Chriſtian world, have been merely playing with ſolemn things, when they have publickly received viſible converts into the viſible church? Not a child in Worceſter, of ten years old, but can at once anſwer the queſtion, which Mr. A. appears unwilling to ſolve. Indeed, it is a difficult one for him: for if he ſay no, it ſpoils his argument for communion with unbaptized perſons; if he ſay yes, that they have joined the viſible church, then he is contrary from all men of whom I have ever before heard or read. Beſides, he would be ſubject to another difficulty; perhaps not one in ten thouſand, if one in the world, will believe him: even children know better. Indeed, the time ſpoken of by the prophet is come, when children ſhould rule the profeſſed people of God. I am ſorry to ſay thus of Mr. A., for I believe him a valuable man in many reſpects; but his good things muſt not ſanction his bad ones. When he employs his time and talents to defend Antichriſt's ordinances and church order, he muſt be expoſed and rebuked ſharply, that he may be found in the faith.

3. We will now attend to another of Mr. A.'s ſophiſms, by which he overturns his whole ſcheme.

His ſcheme or notion is, that the being born again, and eſpecially its being known, conſtitutes perſons members of the viſible church. For, page 14, he ſays, "What! become converted to Chriſt, and not join his kingdom?" intending the viſible church, unleſs he meant to evade. But now we ſhall ſee him, in contradiction to himſelf, plead with his full ſtrength againſt it; or otherwiſe, he is purpoſely keeping the ſubject in debate out of ſight.

We will hear what he ſays. In page 102, of his firſt Letters, his words are, "Whatever be deſigned by the kingdom of God, and whatever is to be underſtood here, by being born of water and of the Spirit, both are neceſſary, as pre-requiſites to a perſon's entering into this kingdom. The birth goes before the entrance." To this, in my Letters to him, page 73, my anſwer is, If you will be kind enough to inform the public, for how long a time a perſon muſt be born before he enters into the world, then they will poſſeſs a neceſſary datum to underſtand your new doctrine, that the birth goes before the entrance. In reply to this, ſays Mr. A. page 26, "Is regeneration then, in all caſes, an entrance into glory?" Here he ſhifts the ſubject which is debating. I was not ſpeaking of the kingdom of glory, but of the viſible kingdom of Chriſt. Here he takes for granted what I have no diſpoſition to deny; and then would have the public believe, what he is unable to prove, that the being born of water, or that baptiſm, is not the entrance into the viſible kingdom of Chriſt. He takes for granted, that regeneration is not, in all caſes, an entrance into glory. Very well; no perſon ſaid it was: but his argument, or concluſion, is what I diſlike. His argument, in ſhort, is this: Regeneration is not an entrance into glory; therefore, baptiſm is not an entrance into the viſible church. Such an argument as this, proves nothing to any man's advantage: it is a mere ſophiſm.

I will here, that every thing may be perfectly plain, preſent with exactneſs my ſentiments on this ſubject.

Firſt, Regeneration, or the new birth, is an entrance into the ſpiritual, or what is uſually termed the *inviſible*, kingdom of Chriſt.

Secondly, The being born of water, or baptiſm, is an entrance, or the entrance, into the *viſible* kingdom of Chriſt.

Thirdly, *Dying in Chriſt* is the entrance into the kingdom of glory.

Now, it is the *entrance* into this ſecond kingdom, the viſible kingdom of Chriſt, which is the ſubject of controverſy.

We ſhall now ſhow that Mr. A. has changed the ſubject, or otherwiſe is chargeable with ſelf-contradiction; he will acknowledge which he pleaſes. If he have changed the ſubject, and proved what is not controverted, and then taken for granted the ſubject of debate, he is chargeable with ſophiſtry, or falſe and diſingenuous argumentation. If he have not changed the ſubject, but intends the viſible kingdom of Chriſt, then he is guilty of ſelf-contradiction,

as will now appear. Page 26, he ſays, the words of Chriſt are, 'Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Now, ſays he, "Let us apply this mode of expreſſion to a familiar caſe. King Ahaſuerus makes a banquet for queen Eſther, and invites Haman. He orders Haman to be told, that except he is habited in white, he cannot enter in to the banquet. Haman puts on white clothing accordingly. Now, ſays Mr. A., is Haman's clothing himſelf in white, before he enters in to the banquet, preparatory to it, or the entrance itſelf?"

By the illuſtration in this his familiar caſe, he tells us, if there be any meaning in it, that to be born again, or converted to Chriſt, is not the entrance into the viſible kingdom of Chriſt, but preparatory to it. But in page 14, in anſwer to a difficult queſtion which I propoſed to him, he told us that it is the entrance; not only ſo, but he tells us that he hath the apoſtles with him in the matter. I preſume he will not tell us that the apoſtles are with him on both ſides of the contradiction. I do not ſo much blame Mr. A. for contradicting himſelf, as I do for his continuing to travel in that crooked path, in which no man can go ſtraight.

The above may ſerve as ſamples of Mr. A.'s ſophiſms, or falſe arguments. I agree to preſent more of them, and to ſhow that his reply to my Letters is little elſe but one continued ſophiſm, ſhould the public good demand it, and the Lord give me opportunity.

The public ſhall now be preſented with a few of his weak arguments, and he appears to have none but of this deſcription.

1. The firſt weak argument which I ſhall mention, is in page 32; and it is given the public in order to deſtroy the natural argument for immerſion which we have in Mark i. 5. from the force of the word *in*. The text is this, 'And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jeruſalem, and were all baptized of him IN the river of Jordan.' The common ſenſe of this text is, that they were immerſed, or buried in baptiſm. But to ſet this natural and ſcriptural argument aſide, Mr. A. preſents the public with the following argument. "I have (ſays he) a Bible pretty full of plates; in one of them referring to this tranſaction, the Baptiſt and the Saviour are repreſented as ſtanding in the margin of the ſtream, to a depth a little above their ankles, and John is pouring water from his hand on

the head of the Saviour." Had Mr. A. have added, that this plate of his was inſerted in his Bible by the direction of the pope, on purpoſe to deceive thoſe who regard pictures more than they do words, very few of his readers would probably have been deceived by it.

2. Another of Mr. A.'s weak arguments is found in page 13; it is againſt what is called cloſe communion, and in the words following:—"O thou ſpirit of Brainerd, reſting in the boſom of thy much-beloved Jeſus, doſt thou witneſs the ſentence which has been paſſed upon thee by one of thy fellow diſciples in this world? Doſt thou hear what is ſaid of thee among men, that when with them, even when thou didſt drain the energies of thy nature in importunate prayer, and in inceſſant labours for the converſion of poor heathens, thou waſt without, where are dogs, and ſorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers?"

What a pity Mr. A. had not have told us one thing more, and have proved it to us, that the amiable and pious David Brainerd was a perfect man, and could not err; then his argument would have had force, and we ſhould have concluded that he walked in all the ſtatutes and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs; then to have known his practice would have been the ſame as to have known the word of God and our duty. Till Mr. A. ſhall prove this much needed point, his argument muſt ſtand for a *weak one;* for it is nothing to the preſent buſineſs to know what Mr. Brainerd did or did not, as to divine inſtitutions, unleſs it be firſt proved that he could not err.

3. But Mr. A. has another argument, page 21, which beggars both theſe; it is upon the ſame ſubject with the preceding argument, againſt cloſe communion, or againſt my arguments for it, and to deſtroy them all at one ſtroke. His words are, "About a year ago, I was at the houſe of a miniſter in this county, and the converſation turning upon the exceſſive vociferation which ſome men practiſe in prayer, the lady of the houſe obſerved, that a ſhort time before a Baptiſt miniſter called upon them, and received hoſpitality for the night. According to the orders of the houſe, the miniſter being abſent, he was requeſted to lead the family in prayer. He did ſo; but it was with ſuch a ſtraining of the voice as fairly ſtunned the family, and ſpoiled their devotions. Having ſat a little while after the concluſion of the prayer, the lady took the liberty to aſk him, Why, Sir, do you halloa ſo in prayer? Do you imagine the Divine Being is a great way off? He replied,

that he had got into the habit, and had not, indeed, much to ſay for it; but, in fact, it was every thing to him, for if he did not pray in that ſounding manner, his people would not think it was praying at all."

This is, I confeſs, a ſingular argument; but how it ſtrikes againſt cloſe communion, I have not ingenuity ſufficient to diſcover; for ſurely this Baptiſt miniſter was for open communion, whilſt the good lady and her family oppoſed it. Why Mr. A. ſhould tell ſuch a fooliſh and improbable ſtory as this, is doubtleſs beſt known to himſelf. However, I will venture to expoſe one of his reaſons, and it is this,—To gratify not a very good diſpoſition, in ridiculing the Baptiſts. Yet, as ridiculous as they are, he confeſſes his principal objection againſt them is, their refuſing to commune with him in the ſecond goſpel ordinance, whilſt he rejects the firſt. This reaſon is not given in his identical words, but I venture to propoſe it to the public, as being ſupported as his by facts and common ſenſe.

We ſhall now turn our attention to a few of Mr. A.'s miſtakes; by theſe, as well as by his ſophiſtry and weak arguments, we may judge of the papiſtical errors which he hath undertaken to defend. I do not ſay, that by the miſtakes we may judge of the man, for ſhould we, I apprehend we ſhould do him great injuſtice, for the man is honourable; but his cauſe and errors, which are now ſinking, are deteſtable, and his defence of them miſerable. To be ſure, the man himſelf appears to diſadvantage, whilſt defending ſo bad a cauſe; and the many miſtakes which he is obliged to make, whilſt labouring to defend ſo crooked a ſide, muſt excite ſome unfavourable ſentiments in thoſe to whom he is unknown. But if he ſuffer a little, better ſo than to have his errors paſs without correction; indeed, deſtruction is the deſerved portion of his errors: we muſt therefore oppoſe ſome of his miſtakes.

1. The firſt miſtake which I ſhall mention, is in his reply to the following requeſt, which I made in the 17th page of my Letters to him, and in theſe words:—Should you write again, pleaſe to inform me by what authority you contradict the tranſlators of the Bible, and injure the ſenſe of this text, (Acts xvi. 34.) by telling us, that the jailor rejoiced domeſtically? His reply is, page 6, "Is this Chriſtian treatment, to charge me with contradicting the tranſlators? I have not done it." To ſettle this matter, I will preſent the reader with the words in queſtion, both as given us by the tranſlators and by Mr. A.

Tranſlators ſay, "He rejoiced, believing in God with all his houſe."

Mr. A. ſays, page 87, the proper rendering is, "He, having believed in God, rejoiced with all his houſe, or domeſtically."

Here, the tranſlators *ſay one thing*, Mr. A. *ſays the proper rendering is another*. The reader will judge whether Mr. A. does not contradict them; and if he does, this is *one miſtake*. But Mr. A. has found a new turn to the original Greek participle for believing. In his former Letters, he told me it was in the ſingular number; in my Reply I obſerved, every Engliſh reader, who is acquainted with the conſtruction of language, knows it is the ſame in our common Bibles; but now he has diſcovered it to be in the perfect tenſe, therefore, and what? therefore, ſays he, it ſerves to reſcue the text from your *preſumptuous comments*. I will give the public the text, with Mr. A.'s participle rendered literally in the perfect time; it ſtands thus:—He (the jailor) rejoiced, *having believed* in God with all his houſe. I aſk, what advantage is Mr. A.'s new diſcovery to him? and how does it reſcue the text from my preſumptuous comments? All my comments are, that the Bible ſpeaks plain Engliſh, and is to be taken as it ſays. I appeal to the world, to judge whoſe comments are preſumptuous; mine, for taking the Bible as it ſays, or his, for changing both words and ſenſe. But Mr. A. replies, "Your preſumptuous comments are calculated to make your unlearned readers conclude, that the jailor's houſehold are ſaid to be believers as well as himſelf." My anſwer is, the tranſlators of the Bible tell us that this is the caſe, and is the ſenſe of the original; and Mr. A. ſays he has not contradicted them. Then my comments are juſt, and calculated to make my unlearned readers, and learned too, conclude juſtly, that the jailor believed and all his houſe.

2. I will now preſent the reader with three or four of Mr. A.'s miſtakes, which he makes in writing leſs than a page. In pages 8, 9, he quotes three of my definitions.

Firſt, Immerſion in the name of the Lord Jeſus, or in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, is the only goſpel baptiſm.

Secondly, No perſon has a right to goſpel baptiſm, but upon his making profeſſion of goſpel faith.

Thirdly, No perſon is a member of Chriſt's viſible church till he is baptized.

To theſe Mr. A. replies thus:—"Theſe ſentiments, I ſaid, and you are not aſhamed to avow the conſequence, go to exclude from Chriſt's viſible church all the multitude of eminently pious and holy perſons, male and female, who have lived and died the ſubjects of baptiſm by ſprinkling or affuſion only, and merely becauſe they have not been baptized by immerſion. This was my leading objection, and you appear to *totter* under the weight of it. It is ſtrange it does not *cruſh you to the ground. I ſhould think* any man, who had made ſuch a conqueſt over his prejudices, could not have this army of co-heirs with Chriſt of eternal bleſſedneſs paſs before his imagination, after having treated them in this cavalier way, *without ſinking as low as the moſt feeling ſelf-deteſtation could place him.* You ſay, 'If it be concluſive againſt my principles, let it deſtroy them.' It *does*, Sir, *deſtroy them. Let it but touch them, and they vaniſh like a bubble.*"

All this ſays Mr. A. We will attend to his variety of miſtakes in this quotation. The firſt is, *That I appear to totter* under the *weight* of *his objection.* His objection is, that my principles go to exclude from Chriſt's *viſible* church all who are not baptized, or immerſed, in the name, &c. This is his objection, under which he ſays I appear to *totter.* This is *his miſtake.* For the avowing of this truth, ſo far from making me *totter*, it emboldens me to tell him another, That all who hold to and receive the human rite of ſprinkling, for the Lord's ordinance of baptiſm, are within the limits of Antichriſt's church, and have ſubmitted to his ordinance, and received *one mark* of the *Beaſt.* Did Mr. A. know his duty and his privilege, he would come out from his errors, and eſpecially from this, and be ſeparate; then would the Lord receive him into his viſible church.

But Mr. A. adds, "It is ſtrange my objection does not cruſh you to the ground." This is another of his miſtakes. For it is not ſtrange at all; for the good word of God ſupports me, by bearing its teſtimony in favour of the correctneſs of my principles. The Lord tells us, that he hath I know not how many pious, godly perſons within the limits of Antichriſt; beſides, he points out the time in which they would be within theſe limits, and informs us that this is the time. See Rev. xvii. xviii. xix. xx. and particularly chap. xviii. 4. where he, by a voice as from heaven, calls to theſe perſons, ſaying, 'Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her ſins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.' Did Mr. A. know what

he is doing, he would be aſtoniſhed and confounded. He is himſelf refuſing to obey the Lord; and not only ſo, he is ignorantly doing what he can to blind others, ſo that they alſo may be diſobedient. This is a great miſtake in him. He may think me bold; I am ſo, and truth makes me ſo; yes, and the time is come, in which the children of God, who know the truth, may be bold. For the *leaven*, which was to *leaven* the whole lump, is remarkably fermenting; and the time is not far off, when the dominion, and the greatneſs of the kingdom under the whole heaven, ſhould be given to God's people. The ſtone cut from the mountain without hands, will ſoon fill the whole earth. At ſuch a time, and thus circumſtanced, ſuch as know the ſigns of the times, may be bold to vindicate the ways of God to men, and to aſſert the *laws*, *ordinances*, and *rightful authority of their King*.

Another miſtake which Mr. A. makes in the above quotation, is, that his objection deſtroys my principles. Again, in the cloſe of the paſſage, he ſays, "Let it but touch them, and they vaniſh like a bubble." This is all miſtake. The good man knows not what he ſays, nor whereof he affirms.

One ſentence, which I have not yet noticed, deſerves particular attention. "*I ſhould think* (ſays he) *any man, who had made ſuch a conqueſt over his prejudices, could not have this army of co-heirs with Chriſt of eternal bleſſedneſs paſs before his imagination, after having treated them in this cavalier way, without ſinking as low as the moſt feeling ſelf-deteſtation could place him.*"

I forgive Mr. A. all his rudeneſs of ſpeech, perceiving he hath a zeal for God, but in this particular not according to knowledge. He *ſuppoſes* that he is with the truth; but, as his brother Emmons informs us, *when a man comes to the truth, he* KNOWS *it*. Can he ſuppoſe, that I ſhould deteſt myſelf for telling him the truth, and for placing many of the Lord's people within the *limits* of Antichriſt, when the Lord tells me they are *there*, and *commands them to come out?* Beſides, who knows but God hath choſen me, to be one of the weak inſtruments, by which his people ſhall ſo effectually hear his voice as to be obedient? However this may be, one thing I know—it becomes me to declare his truth, and not be afraid. May Mr. A. hear and obey.

3. I muſt now mention another of his miſtakes, which is alſo connected with a ſophiſm.

I do not expoſe Mr. A. that I may provoke him, unleſs it be to relinquiſh a bad cauſe; but that he may ſee what abſurdities and blunders it unavoidably leads him into, and thus be perſuaded to give truth one candid review. Mr. A. has abilities enough to go ſtraight in a plain highway, but no man has a ſufficiency to go thus in a crooked path.

This miſtake and ſophiſm of his are in page 12, where his words to me are, "You ſay, page 20, one of our principles is, that no perſon is a fit ſubject of baptiſm, unleſs he be a penitent; if it is, (ſays he) the greater is your error; but I do not believe it is: it was not Dr. Gill's principle." This is Mr. A.'s miſtake; for there is not a Baptiſt in the world, nor has been, who has any principles upon the ſubject, but this is one of them, that no perſon is a *fit ſubject* of baptiſm unleſs he be a penitent. Had Mr. A. have known the goſpel fitneſs for baptiſm, he would have known this with equal certainty that he knows an hypocrite is not a fit ſubject for communion at the Lord's table. Beſides, his argument to prove that Dr. Gill did not hold this principle is a mere ſophiſm, and proves no ſuch thing. If Dr. Gill expreſsly ſays, as Mr. A. informs us, "that Simon Magus was baptized in a *pure* and *apoſtolic way*," this is no evidence that he was a fit ſubject. Simon Magus *was baptized* upon a *profeſſion of faith;* this was the pure and apoſtolic way; yet he was not a fit ſubject, he only appeared to be. The adminiſtrator was but a man, and was therefore obliged to judge from what was viſible. Could the adminiſtrator have ſeen Simon's true character, he would have known him to be not a fit ſubject. The adminiſtrator's not diſcovering this unfitneſs, did not change Simon's hypocriſy into goſpel fitneſs for baptiſm; yet, as Simon made profeſſion of faith, and appeared to poſſeſs it, he was baptized in the pure and apoſtolic way.

4. Mr. A. in the ſame page, gives us another of his miſtakes. Says he, "Be this (about Simon) however as it may; one of your principles is, that no perſon is a member of Chriſt's church till he is baptized. This reduces you to the neceſſity of contending, that there may be millions of viſible Chriſtians, eminently ſuch, who are not in Chriſt's viſible church. One would ſuppoſe beforehand, that a man muſt be put to it exceſſively to maintain ſuch a ſentiment as this." To be ſure, ſuch as judge *beforehand, ſuch as judge of a matter before they hear it,* might ſuppoſe a man put to it exceſſively, to maintain, that there may be

millions of viſible Chriſtians, eminently ſuch, who are not in Chriſt's viſible church. But when one comes to hear the matter, and finds this was to be the caſe, that many were, at ſuch a time as this, to be found, not only out of Chriſt's viſible church, but within the limits of Antichriſt's, and eſpecially when one comes to hear the Lord calling this multitude out of her, he no longer ſuppoſes the man holding this principle muſt be put to it exceſſively; but he knows the opponents have an hard ſide to defend, and that they muſt make *many miſtakes.*

5. We will therefore attend to another of Mr. A.'s miſtakes. Says he, pages 16, 17, a man "may have no knowledge of the viſible church, yet he may know that he is a ſinner and needs forgiveneſs. He may be acquainted with Chriſt, and the way of ſalvation through him, and believe to the ſaving of his ſoul. This may be known to hundreds of Chriſtians, at a diſtance. He may, of courſe, be a member of the viſible church: *for a man's viſibility reſpects what he is in the eyes of others.* Would he not be a *member* of the *viſible church*, if he were *baptized?* If he *would*, then the *ſuppoſed difficulty*, from *his ſituation*, is *no difficulty at all.*"

Here Mr. A. gives up and condemns his whole ſcheme, and then adds a great miſtake at the cloſe. The reader will bear in mind, that Mr. A.'s ſcheme is, that when a man is converted he belongs to the viſible church; for he ſays, page 14, "What! be converted to Chriſt, and not join his kingdom?" as he explains himſelf, What! become converted to Chriſt, and not, at the ſame time, become a member of his viſible church? But here, he tells us, *That the converſion of an heathen being known to others, is what conſtitutes him a member of the viſible church.* To ſhow Mr. A. that by labouring to extricate himſelf from one perplexing caſe, he has involved himſelf in another of equal difficulty, I will propoſe for his conſideration this queſtion:—Suppoſe no Chriſtian knew of this heathen man's converſion, would he then belong to the viſible church? If he anſwer, Yes, then he contradicts what he has juſt ſaid, *that a man's viſibility reſpects what he is in the eyes of others.* If he ſay, No, then he gives up his ſcheme, *that a converſion of a perſon conſtitutes him a member of the viſible church.* Mr. A. is in a perplexing caſe. But we will ſee his miſtake at the cloſe. "Would he not (ſays he) be a member of the viſible church, if he were baptized?" To be ſure, if he were baptized he would be a member of the viſible church; for goſpel baptiſm is the very thing which conſtitutes him a

member. Now, ſays Mr. A. "if he would, then the ſuppoſed difficulty, from his ſituation, is no difficulty at all." That is, if a converted heathen, who is favoured with an adminiſtrator, baptized, and thus received into the viſible church, would be a member of it, then there is no difficulty in ſuppoſing him a member of the viſible church, though he has never been thus favoured, nor ever admitted into it. In what confuſion are Mr. A.'s ideas! The fault, however, is not his deficiency of talents, but in the miſerably erroneous cauſe he is defending.

6. But I haſten to another of Mr. A.'s miſtakes. In my Letters to him, page 38, my words are,—All your objection againſt allowing that the apoſtle (in Rom. vi. 4. and Col. ii. 12.) alludes to and intends water baptiſm, is conſidered to ariſe from an apprehenſion that immerſion would certainly follow. His reply is, page 33, "You muſt conſider it ſo, if you will; but my apprehenſion really has another origin. It is, that an inſuperable objection would be furniſhed againſt the apoſtle's inſpiration; for then he would teach us, that water baptiſm, inſtead of the *baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt*, is the thing by which we become dead to ſin and riſe to newneſs of life."

Here Mr. A. is again in difficulty. His difficulty ariſes from a miſtake which he has made. I will endeavour to expoſe the one, and thus help him out of the other. His miſtake is, that we ſhould endanger the inſpiration of the apoſtle, did we not believe that we become dead to ſin and riſe to newneſs of life by the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt. The fact is, Mr. A. has wholly miſtaken the ſcriptures, in this matter. They ſay nothing about a perſon's becoming dead to ſin, or riſing to newneſs of life, by the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt; nor by water baptiſm, otherwiſe than by a figure. This expoſes his miſtake, and opens the door for him to leave his difficulty, if he chooſe. For ſurely, our not believing contrary from the ſcriptures, but believing them as they are, can furniſh no inſuperable objection, nor an objection of any other kind, againſt the inſpiration of the apoſtle.*

* This miſtake of Mr. A.'s, he might receive from the Rev. Mr. Pariſh, of Byefield, whoſe ſtrong party Sermon was founded upon the ſame miſtake. Let the reader but be delivered from this new notion, that perſons are born again by being baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, and he at once ſees through the fallacy and diſcovers the profound weakneſs of what Mr P. ſo ſmartly ſaid againſt the Baptiſts, in his Sermon of May laſt. The author has fallen into the very miſtake to which he

7. I will now present the public with an whole cluster of Mr. A.'s mistakes, and they may be taken as a specimen of all the remainder; afterwards some of his misrepresentations will be noticed. This group of mistakes is in his 47th page. In the first place, I will present this bundle of

considered the Baptists, on account of their extreme ignorance, to be much exposed. He has, to an uncommon degree, misapplied one of the figures of inspiration. He has been kind enough to inform us, that spiritual baptism, or the baptism of the Holy Ghost, is the new birth, or regeneration; but has not furnished his authority. He tells us that the text means this. We deny that the text, or that any other text in the Bible, has ever said any such thing. How are we *buried with Christ in baptism, or raised with him in baptism*, in the moment of regeneration, any more than in every succeeding holy exercise? This is a new invention of his and his brethren, to get rid of the gospel baptism.

The old Romanists considered *water baptism* to be *regeneration*, or the latter to be connected with the former, or to depend on it; so that, when baptism was performed, regeneration was effected. So have the Church of England considered this matter. But, if I mistake not, no author, till Mr. P. and some of his brethren, to justify their unscriptural rite of sprinkling, and to take from the baptized church the plain scripture account of gospel baptism, arose, has ever pretended that regeneration is the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The Bible mentions nothing of their forced construction of the figurative language of inspiration. The scripture account is totally different from Mr. P.'s. That informs us, Acts i. 5. that the disciples, who had long before followed their divine Lord in *the regeneration*, should be baptized with the Holy Ghost not *many days hence*. Mr. P. must either conclude, that persons in the days of Christ and his apostles were regenerated twice, or that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is now a different thing from what it then was; or that regeneration is not the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and *consequently*, that a *little more erudition* is *necessary to his explaining* the *bold figures* of *revelation*

But to spoil Mr. P.'s whole supposed strength at a stroke, let the reader but view his contrast. It is this—"As the burial of Jesus Christ gave evidence that he had really died, the just for the unjust; so we, in our spiritual baptism, show ourselves to be really dead to sin."

Mr. P. compares or *equals spiritual baptism* with *regeneration*, page 131, of the Collection. Then we will take regeneration instead of spiritual baptism, and see how his contrast will stand the test of scripture and his own sentiments. "As the burial of Jesus Christ gave evidence that he had really died, the just for the unjust; so we, in regeneration, show ourselves to be really dead to sin."

The scriptures say, The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is *born* of the Spirit. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, or as evidence of repentance. By their fruits ye shall know them, &c. In these texts, nor in any other, is there any intimation, that in regeneration we show ourselves to be dead to sin; but that this is made visible by the fruits of regeneration, or by the actions of the new creature; but not by the operation of the Spirit, in which he is regenerated

miſtakes entire; then expoſe them one by one. Mr. A. introduces and preſents them in the following manner.

"In page 74, to my argument (ſays he) from your ſuppoſed opinion, that many dying in infancy are ſaved, you reply in this manner:—'Perhaps your idea is this, That I

If I underſtand Mr. P.'s ſentiments, they are,—1. That a natural man hath not one ſpiritually good thought. 2. That regeneration is effected by the ſpecial agency of the Holy Ghoſt. 3. That the *manifeſt exercises* of the new creature are the *natural conſequences* of *regeneration*, but are not themſelves regeneration.

Theſe being his ſentiments, then his contraſt is at war with them, as well as with the Bible: for we do not, in regeneration, ſhow ourſelves dead to ſin; but in the conſequent acts or fruits of it, we ſhow this.

If theſe obſervations be juſt, Mr. P. had been more prudent had he kept his Sermon to himſelf, and expreſſed leſs fear leſt the *poor*, *ignorant*, and *illiterate* Baptiſts ſhould greatly injure the cauſe of Chriſt, by *miſ-applications* of *ſcripture figures*.

But Mr. P. in his note, pages 143, 144, hath manifeſted his mind to be ſo crowded with oppoſition to the baptized church, as to deprive him of his uſual ſprightlineſs of recollection. Thus it hath happened to him, as is common to thoſe who are over zealous; they betray themſelves, rather than foil their opponents. As Mr P. hath, with no ſmall rudeneſs, expoſed himſelf, he cannot juſtly take it unkindly to have his *note* increaſe its publicity. I ſhall take liberty to tranſcribe a few ſentences, of which I ſhould have thought Mr. P. incapable. Should he publickly deny their being his, and prove his innocency, then will they be taken from his account. But they look ſo like other parts of his Sermon, proof might be difficult, unleſs he deny the whole.

Says he, "Probably the (Baptiſt) denomination have received ſome advantage, in the courſe of a century or two, from a few ſolitary congregational preachers joining them, who had received diplomas from ſome college. This muſt, however, be one of their minor advantages; for when was it known that the *diſtinguiſhed members* of a *party deſerted*? *Men*, *conſcious* of their *inferiority* to *their brethren* in *literature* and *talents*, have a *powerful temptation* to *apoſtatize*, where their *relative greatneſs* will be *advanced*."

A few queſtions for the reader.

1. Could Mr. P. had not his recollection been loſt, but have called to mind, that the very apoſtle who wrote his text, was *one* of theſe *deſerters*?

2. Did not Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, James, and Jude, all of them, deſert their party, the Jewiſh church, and join the Chriſtian?

3. Did not Martin Luther and John Calvin deſert their party, the Judaized and Judaizing church of Rome?

4. Did not all the *celebrated reformers* of the reformed church deſert their party, and come out, in meaſure, from the man of ſin?

5. Did not all the leaders of the Congregational and Preſbyterian denominations, when they broke off from the Church of England, or from the communion of the Papiſts, deſert their party?

6. Were none of theſe, diſtinguiſhed members of the party whence they broke off?

believe ſome infants, who have not been immerſed, may go to heaven, and be finally ſaved. This, Sir, I do believe. But what hath this to do with the preſent controverſy?" It hath this to do with it, Sir; it entirely refutes your hypotheſis. You have *no warrant* to believe any *human being is ſaved*, who is not to you a *viſible member* of the *kingdom of Chriſt*. *This is the force of the argument*, which you have not noticed at all. Your notion of holding people to be good people, and heirs of glory, who have no viſible place in the kingdom of God, is an outrage upon common ſenſe, and a contradiction to the whole Bible. You exclude all infants, without exception, from this viſible kingdom; the conſequence is, that no warrant remains for you to conſider any of them as ſaved. All the heirs of ſalvation are ſpoken of as being ſuch viſibly in this world. Iſaiah lxi. 9. And their ſeed ſhall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that ſee them ſhall acknowledge them, that they are the ſeed which the Lord hath bleſſed. Hundreds of other texts there are to the ſame purpoſe."

The reader will particularly notice my words, which gave occaſion to Mr. A. to make the miſtakes which follow. My words are, I believe ſome infants, who have not been immerſed, may go to heaven and be finally ſaved. I then aſk, But what hath this to do with the preſent controverſy? His reply is, "It hath this to do with it; it entirely refutes your hypotheſis." The reader ſhall know my hypotheſis; it is this—No unbaptized perſon belongs to the *viſible church* of Chriſt. This hypotheſis, ſays he, is entirely refuted by allowing, that ſome children, who have not been baptized, or immerſed, and ſo not in Chriſt's *viſible church*, may be finally ſaved. If this ſentiment refute my hypotheſis, then the old papiſtical notion which Mr. A. hath adopted is true—*That none but church members can poſſibly be ſaved.* This is *one* of his miſtakes.

Again, he ſays, "You have *no warrant* to believe, that any human being is ſaved, who is not to you a viſible

7. Did not Mr P. in his zeal, ſo forget himſelf, as to denounce all the famous leaders of his own and of all other denominations, that he might, not in a very becoming manner, aim his unkind ſhafts againſt a few ſolitary Congregational preachers, who have, to anſwer a good conſcience, dared to renounce the traditions of men, that they might keep the commandments of the Lord?

I ſhall now leave Mr. P. to his own reflections, and the public to form their own judgment, upon ſuch management as this.

member of the kingdom of Chriſt." I will here preſent my warrant. God tells me, Rev. xviii. 4. that he hath people within the limits of *Antichriſt's* church. Thoſe who are within the limits of Antichriſt's church, are not to me, nor ought they to be conſidered by any, as members of the *viſible* church of Chriſt. I have, therefore, a warrant to believe that ſome of theſe, who are born of Chriſt's Spirit, being within the limits of Babylon, and many of them living and dying there, not only *may* be ſaved, but muſt be. This expoſes *another* of his miſtakes.

Again, ſays he, "This is the force of the argument, which you have not noticed at all." What the force of the argument? That none but viſible church members can be ſaved. Which, ſays he, "you have not noticed at all." Then it ſhall be noticed; for it is one of the firſt-born ſons of the church of Rome. The pope, moſt aſſuredly, conſiders himſelf and his church as the only church of Chriſt, and that *none* can be ſaved *out of his bounds;* hence it is lawful for him to kill all heretics, all who will not ſubmit to his holy catholic church; and to convert by fire and ſword, as for many ages he did, the heathen nations to his religion, and compelled them to be members of his church. Theſe violent meaſures may be greatly palliated, if the pope's ſentiment be correct. It is, however, the ſame with Mr. A.'s. Hence, if the force of Mr. A.'s argument be allowed, or the ſentiment in which the force of it is, not one within the limits of Antichriſt's kingdom, not one within the Mahometan countries, not one in any heathen nation, can be ſaved. No, nor can one infant, from Adam's day to our's, have been ſaved; nor can one adult, who may die at ſea, where there is no Chriſtian to behold him, nor one who may die in our own land, and is not known to be a Chriſtian by others, be ever ſaved. For Mr. A. informs us, we have no *warrant* to believe that any are ſaved who are not *members* of *Chriſt's viſible* church; and page 16, he tells us, that no man is a member of Chriſt's viſible church, unleſs he is ſeen or known to be ſo by others; for, ſays he, "*A man's viſibility reſpects what he is in the eyes of others.*" Hence, if Chriſtians do not know or conſider us to be of their number, there can be no hope of our ſalvation. I will conſider the force of this argument farther, when he ſhall deſire it.

Again, ſays our author, "Your notion of holding people to be good people, and heirs of glory, who have no *viſible* place in the kingdom of God, is an outrage upon common

ſenſe, and a contradiction to the whole Bible." That is, my notion that any are converted before they belong to the *viſible* church of Chriſt, and that there are any of his holy or regenerated people, who do not belong to this church of Chriſt, is an outrage upon common ſenſe, and a contradiction to the whole Bible. I venture to ſay, that all the *genuine common ſenſe* which there is in the world, will ſet down this charge of Mr. A.'s as *one* of his *miſtakes*. Beſides, I will venture to ſay a little farther, that I know of no denomination of profeſſed Chriſtians, in any part of the globe, ſave his holineſs the pope and his blinded and biggoted adherents, who are in ſentiment with Mr. A. Yes, and the Bible no where intimates, that my notion is erroneous, or that *his* is correct; but, on the other hand, it every where, when the ſubject is mentioned, teſtifies that my notion is according to truth, and that his is a miſtake, not to ſay a deluſion. The preaching of John was, that the people ſhould repent and be converted, for the kingdom of heaven, the viſible church of Chriſt, was at hand; otherwiſe, they would not be prepared to join it. The plain, the ſimple, the unequivocal idea is, that they muſt be converted to God, before they were fit ſubjects, or prepared to join the *viſible* church of Chriſt. The preaching of Jeſus Chriſt was the ſame, and he ſpake and ſtill ſpeaks the ſame language. The broad commiſſion which our Lord gave his diſciples was, that they ſhould teach, and ſo teach that their hearers ſhould become diſciples, believers, and converted perſons; and this too before they were to baptize them, or to receive them into the *viſible* church of Chriſt. Thoſe who were thus converted were, as we are told in the Acts of the Apoſtles, added to the church daily. Beſides, the Bible ſpeaks of God's having people, who are not only out of Chriſt's *viſible* church, but within the *limits* of Antichriſt's, Rev. xviii.

Again, Mr. A. goes on, and tells me, ſaying, "You exclude all infants, without exception, from this viſible kingdom." Certainly, and who told *him* to put them in? He adds, "The conſequence is, that no warrant remains for you to conſider any of them as ſaved." This conſequence is *another* of his *miſtakes*. There is no connexion between his premiſe and concluſion.

Once more, ſays he, "All the heirs of ſalvation are ſpoken of as being ſuch viſibly in this world." This alſo is one of his miſtakes. But he has attempted to prove it. Let us hear his evidence. "Iſaiah lxi. 9. And their ſeed

ſhall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that ſee them ſhall acknowledge them, that they are the ſeed which the Lord hath bleſſed. Hundreds of other texts there are to the ſame purpoſe." To what purpoſe? To prove that none ſhall be ſaved, but ſuch as belong to the *viſible* church of Chriſt on earth? This text ſays no ſuch thing; yet he ſays, "Hundreds of other texts there are to the *ſame purpoſe.*" Truly, there are; but *where* is there one to *his purpoſe?* Not a ſingle text, from Geneſis to Revelation, which gives him the leaſt countenance.

Theſe miſtakes, which have been now mentioned, may be taken by the reader as a ſample for the reſt; indeed, his pamphlet is little elſe but one *great miſtake.*

Should Mr. A. take advantage, becauſe I have not expoſed all his miſtakes, and hereafter pretend that I admit one ſentence of his erroneous ſtatements to be true, becauſe I have not in particular expoſed the whole, I may, if the Lord will, at ſome future time, unmaſk the reſt; but for the preſent we will turn our attention to two or three of his miſrepreſentations.

1. The firſt which I ſhall notice is in page 14, where, ſpeaking of the *viſible* church of Chriſt, his words are, "Your breaking up of the church of Chriſt into little petty detachments, and making it neceſſary for a man to become incorporated into one of them, in order to his being a member of that church, is unſcriptural." The whole of this is a ſheer miſrepreſentation. What the good man meant, or can honeſtly mean, I know not. If he mean, that it is unſcriptural to hold the church of Chriſt hath many branches, ſuch as, the church of Corinth, the church of Epheſus, the church of Coloſſe, the church in the houſe of Philemon, &c. is unſcriptural, then he would have us *believe* that the *Bible* is *unſcriptural.* If he would have us believe it to be unſcriptural, to hold that a perſon muſt be incorporated into a particular branch of Chriſt's church, in order to his being a member of that branch, then he would teach us that the ſcriptures are not conſiſtent with common ſenſe. If he intend to convey to the public this idea,—that I make it neceſſary for a perſon to be incorporated into ſome particular branch of Chriſt's church, in order to his being a *member* of his *viſible* church, this is mere miſrepreſentation; I have no ſuch ſentiment; I have, to my knowledge, advocated nothing which looks like it. My ſentiment is, that when a perſon is baptized upon a profeſſion of faith he belongs to

Chriſt's viſible church. This is what I told him in the 22d page of my Letters to him. He has either miſrepreſented the ſcriptures, and taught us to believe that they are unſcriptural and contrary from common ſenſe, or he has miſrepreſented my ſentiment, which I have publickly and fully expreſſed.

2. His next miſrepreſentation which is to be noticed, is in his 11th page; it is contained in his anſwer to a paſſage which he quoted from the 20th page of my Letters to him. I will give the public the paſſage, together with the remainder of the paragraph. It is this—'The manner (ſay I to him) in which *you throw* the *objection* before the public, has a very natural tendency to give an incautious reader a very unjuſt idea of the tendency of my principles. He would naturally enough conclude, that I muſt, if conſiſtent with myſelf, believe that no one except the Baptiſts has any religion; that I conſider and treat all others as being impenitent and ungodly; yes, as being profligate and unregenerate. A more unjuſt idea could not be communicated; ſuch an idea is not only inconſiſtent with my principles, but they forbid any perſon's ſuggeſting that ſuch an idea could fairly be deduced from them. One of our principles is, that no perſon is a fit ſubject of baptiſm, unleſs he be a penitent, a godly, a regenerate perſon.'

To this Mr. A. ſaw fit to reply, in the words following: "No, Sir, it has a tendency to give a *juſt idea* of the tendency of your principle; you yourſelf could not be *blind* to this *tendency*, for *you call it natural*. He would, indeed, naturally enough conclude, that you muſt, if conſiſtent with yourſelf, believe that none except the Baptiſts have any religion." Then, to complete the matter, he adds one of his ſophiſms, to prove that he had done well. Both his miſrepreſentation and ſophiſm muſt be here expoſed.

"The manner in which he threw his objection before the public (he ſays) has a tendency to give a juſt idea of the tendency of your principles. You could not (continues he) be blind to this *tendency*, for *you call it natural*." Here he perverts my words, and makes me ſay juſt what I denied, or juſt the contrary from what I ſaid. What I told him was, "that the *manner* in which *he threw* the *objection* before the public, has a *very natural tendency* to give an *incautious* reader a *very unjuſt idea* of the *tendency* of my principles." He tells the public, that it has a *tendency* to give a *juſt idea*, and that I call it a *natural tendency*. That is, he tells the public that I allow that the *manner* in which he threw the

objection before them has a *natural tendency* to give a *juſt idea* of my principles; whereas I told him it had a *very natural tendency* to give a *very unjuſt idea* of them. Such management will afford but little credit even to a bad cauſe.

But we will attend to his ſophiſm, by which he would prove the whole. Says he, "Nothing is plainer, than that you have no warrant to believe a perſon has any religion who has not the *viſibility* of *religion*." Certainly, we have no warrant to believe that a perſon has any religion who has no appearance of it. But what hath this to do with the preſent debate? How does it prove, that, to be conſiſtent with my principles, I muſt believe that none has religion but the Baptiſts, when my principles are, that no one can honeſtly become a Baptiſt, or a baptized profeſſor, unleſs he be *previouſly* a *poſſeſſor* of religion. Mr. A. is either afraid to know the principles of the Baptiſts, or he cannot underſtand them, or he will not; for if he can and would know them, then he could not honeſtly make ſo many miſtakes about them.

3. I will mention but one more of his miſrepreſentations, and that is in page 31, in which he preſents to the public certain ſentiments, and repreſents them as being mine, whereas they are ſome of his own, which I put together for his inſpection. He has inſpected one particular, and ſays of it thus: "You make (ſays he) the ſtrongeſt application of this imaginable. You ſay, to be buried with Chriſt in baptiſm, to be planted in the likeneſs of his death, and to be riſen with him in baptiſm, Rom. vi. 4, 5. and Col. ii. 12. is to be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, or the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt exactly coincides with this repreſentation." Theſe ſentiments are by no means mine; I believe no ſuch thing. To ſhow the reader Mr. A.'s miſrepreſentation, and that the ſtrange work that he attributes to me is his, I will preſent the above paſſage with its connexion, as ſet down in pages 30, 31, of my Letters.

I obſerved to him thus:—'Speaking of Rom. vi. 4. *you* ſay, page 45, "The ſpiritual, internal baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, exactly coincides with the whole of his (the apoſtle's) repreſentation, and invariably produces the effects he mentions."

'In page 48, ſpeaking of Col. ii. 12. *your* words are, "It is juſt like the other," i. e. it is juſt like the above paſſage, Rom. vi. 4.

'In the paſſage which we have been juſt conſidering, pages 33, 34, *you* tell us, "Water baptiſm is undoubtedly a ſymbol of the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, which is a figurative baptiſm;" pages 60, 61.

'In page 60, *you* have theſe words,—"There muſt be ſome evident likeneſs between the ſubject to which a word is applied, in the *natural* and *primitive* uſe of it, and the *ſubject* to which it is applied as a *figure*; otherwiſe there is a groſs impropriety in the figurative uſe of it."

'Now, Sir, (ſaid I) permit me to put theſe ideas, conceſſions, and declarations of *yours* together.

'1. To be buried with Chriſt in baptiſm, to be planted in the likeneſs of his death, to be buried with him by baptiſm, Rom. vi. 4, 5. and Col. ii. 12. is to be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt; or the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt exactly coincides with this repreſentation.

'2. There is an evident likeneſs between the natural idea of planting, burying, and riſing as from the dead, and the figurative baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, or there is a groſs impropriety (as you ſay) in the apoſtle's figurative uſe of the words.

'3. Water baptiſm is a ſymbol or figure of the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt; it is, therefore, a burying, a planting, or immerſion, *your Letters* as well as the word of God being judge.

'Hence, Sir, (ſaid I) by going a large diſtance round, to avoid what you feared, you have proved to my hand what I endeavoured to eſtabliſh through the courſe of five ſermons.'

The reader will now judge who it was that *made* the *ſtrongeſt application imaginable*, and whether it be not a miſrepreſentation for Mr. A. to palm his erroneous ſentiments upon the public as being mine?

But ſays Mr. A. "I obſerved to you, that the things compared by the apoſtle were, our death to ſin with Chriſt's natural death, our ſpiritual burial with his burial, and our riſing to newneſs of life with his reſurrection. In the language of the apoſtle, the baptiſm he ſpeaks of is diſtinguiſhable from the burial, the latter being in or by the former. I repeat it, and beg you would not overlook the diſtinction. I take theſe things, our death, burial, and reſurrection, to be effects, and baptiſm the cauſe."

As Mr. A. begs me not to overlook the diſtinction between effects and cauſe, I will not, but attend to it; and

then we ſhall ſee if *his* cauſe looks any the better for being attended to.

He informs us, firſt, That death to ſin, ſpiritual burial, and riſing again to newneſs of life, are the effects of baptiſm.

Second, That water baptiſm has ſome evident likeneſs to the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, or to regeneration, which produces theſe effects, death to ſin, ſpiritual burial, and reſurrection to newneſs of life.

Third, That the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt is the cauſe of our death to ſin, ſpiritual burial, and reſurrection to newneſs of life, and *water baptiſm* has ſome evident likeneſs to it.

Now I aſk the reader, and am willing Mr. A. ſhould hear me, firſt, What likeneſs is there between infant ſprinkling, or affuſion, and what *he calls* the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, or a being born of the Spirit, which, ſays he, is the *cauſe* of ſpiritual death, burial and reſurrection? Is there any likeneſs between them? Chriſt aſſures us that we know not *how* the Spirit *goes*, or comes, in regeneration; there can, therefore, be no evident likeneſs. There muſt, however, be ſome evident likeneſs between the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, or regeneration, and the ſprinkling or pouring water on an infant; or one of theſe two things is true; either, firſt, The apoſtle was guilty of a groſs impropriety in likening them together; or, ſecondly, He has not likened them together, as Mr. A. tells us that he has. If the apoſtle have not compared or likened them together, then infant ſprinkling, or affuſion, is not goſpel baptiſm, or elſe one of the following things is true; either, firſt, There is no likeneſs between water baptiſm and the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, as Mr. A. tells us there is; or, ſecondly, The apoſtle, in Rom. vi. 4, and Col. ii. 12, is not ſpeaking of the *baptiſm* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, where Mr. A. ſays he is. Hence, Mr. A. hath not told us the truth, or *infant ſprinkling* and *affuſion* are not goſpel baptiſm. Beſides, no perſon, in the full uſe of his reaſon, can ſay there is even the *leaſt likeneſs* between *putting a little water upon a child's face*, and the production of a natural death, burial and reſurrection. Mr. A. then has but this alternative, either to relinquiſh his bad cauſe as loſt, or confeſs his wrong ſtatements, forſake his erroneous poſitions, take new ground, and ſet out afreſh. No wonder Mr. A. tells us, that, if we write again, our performances will not be entitled to notice, unleſs we bring ſomething new, or give the controverſy a new turn. For, I confeſs, were I on his ground, I ſhould prefer any new

thing, and any new turn, rather than have the old, tried ſubſtantial truths brought againſt me again.

2d, But I have another queſtion to put to the reader. It is this. Does your Bible ſay, in any one place, ſo much as one word about *baptiſm*, (whether the baptiſm of water or of the Holy Ghoſt) as being the cauſe of death to ſin, ſpiritual burial, (unleſs the houſe being filled, on the day of Pentecoſt, with the divine preſence and glory, might be thus termed) or of reſurrection to newneſs of life? It muſt ſay *thus ſomewhere*, or *this* muſt be the ſentiment of the Bible, or Mr. A. hath made another *great miſtake*, and was hardly *prudent* in begging me to notice it. Should he ſay, that, on the day of Pentecoſt, the apoſtles were ſpiritually buried, that is, they were immerſed, or overwhelmed in the ever memorable affuſions of the Spirit, then he becomes a Baptiſt at once; for he ſays, water baptiſm is a ſymbol, or figure of it. But, if he ſay, that he intends, by the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, his regenerating influences, then I have another queſtion to put to the reader—

3d. Does your Bible ever ſpeak of regeneration, or converſion, as being the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt? It appears, that Mr. A. and his brethren have gotten a kind of baptiſm of their own; a kind of baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, which contradicts the Bible account of that baptiſm, nearly as much as do their ſprinkling and affuſion for baptiſm. This they appear to have invented, to juſtify them for ſetting aſide the goſpel water baptiſm. Thus has it frequently happened, ſuch, as venture to depart from the good old Bible way, are conſtrained to invent ſome new errors to cover their old ones.

I wiſh to make a few obſervations, and then ſhall quit this part of my reply to Mr. A.

1. I wiſh to know of him, or of any of his brethren, who told them, that to be dead to ſin is to be baptized of the Holy Ghoſt? Rom. vi. 2.

2. I wiſh to know of any of them, if they be able to tell me, who gave them the information, that to be baptized into Jeſus Chriſt is to be baptized into the Holy Ghoſt, and with the Holy Ghoſt? Rom. vi. 3.

3. I wiſh to know whether, according to their notion of infant baptiſm, their children are not baptized into Jeſus Chriſt; and then whether all their children are baptized with the Holy Ghoſt? For ſays Paul, *So many* of us as were baptized into Jeſus Chriſt were baptized into his death.

4. I wiſh to be informed by any of them, who told them, and how they obtained their information, that to be buried with Chriſt by baptiſm into death is the ſame as being baptized with the Holy Ghoſt? Or, to pleaſe Mr. A. I will ſtate the queſtion a little differently. Who told him and his brethren, that the effect of being baptized with the Holy Ghoſt is to be buried *with Chriſt by baptiſm?* For ſays Paul, Rom. vi. 4, We are buried with him by baptiſm into death. He does not, however, ſay a word of this being the *effect* of the *baptiſm* of the *Holy Ghoſt.*

5. I deſire to know who told them, that to walk in newneſs of life was to be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, or was the effect of this baptiſm? Rom. vi. 4. For ſays Mr. A. "the ſpiritual, internal, baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt exactly coincides with the whole of this repreſentation." Rom. vi. 1—6.

6. I wiſh to know of Mr. A. or of any of his brethren, whether Peter, John, James, and the reſt of the holy brethren, who were aſſembled in Jeruſalem, on the memorable morning of Pentecoſt, were baptized *twice* by the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt? For they were *raiſed to newneſs* of life, long before that morning aroſe; and Mr. A. tells us, that to be *raiſed* to *newneſs* of life is the effect of the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt. They muſt therefore have been thus baptized long before, or the *effect* muſt have preceded the cauſe. To underſtand which would puzzle Mr. A. as much as it did Preſident Edwards to underſtand the ſelf-determining power in the Arminians. This, however, muſt be underſtood and explained, or elſe they will not be able to clear themſelves from the hereſy of *ſpiritual anabaptiſm.* For none of them will dare deny, but the diſciples were baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, on the morning of that memorable day, when thouſands were converted under Peter's ſermon.

7. I wiſh to know who told theſe good men, that to be *planted* in the likeneſs of Chriſt's death in baptiſm is the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, or is the effect of it?

8. I wiſh to know of Mr. A. or of any of his brethren, who told them, that to be buried with Chriſt *in* baptiſm is to be *baptized in the Holy Ghoſt*, or is the *effect* of this baptiſm? Col. ii. 12.

9. I deſire to know of them, who gave them authority to ſay and teach theſe things? We find not a word of all this matter in all the Bible. If they would, any of them, be conſidered as miniſters of Chriſt, they ſhould teach what

he hath commanded them, and not be amuſing their hearers and the public with ſuch vain things, and for a purpoſe ſtill more vain, to pervert the goſpel of Chriſt, or, at beſt, its firſt ordinance and the ſubjects of it.

Perhaps Mr. A. will not again beg me to attend to his diſtinctions: but I ſhall, if the Lord give me opportunity, unleſs he and his brethren ceaſe to pervert the Scriptures as they have hitherto done.

We ſhall now take under conſideration ſome other things, which, in Mr. A.'s Letters need correction. It may ſurpriſe the public, that a man of Mr. A.'s character, and good ſenſe, ſhould miſs the truth at every ſtep. But when it is conſidered, that the ſide which he defends is nothing but falſehood and error, the ſurpriſe vaniſhes, and it would have been unaccountable, had he done otherwiſe, and yet been conſiſtent with himſelf and cauſe.

Such as continue in their errors will, no doubt, be diſpleaſed with me for expoſing him and them, and will probably wiſh to hear no more of the controverſy. But ſo long as truth is better than error, and the command continues, to contend earneſtly for the faith which was once delivered to the ſaints; ſo long muſt the errors of the erroneous be expoſed.

Some of the remaining errors in Mr. A.'s Letters, which need correction, are the following:

1. Says he to me p. 7, "Your third Letter to me is now to come under conſideration.

"In the beginning of this Letter, you make pretenſions to candour and fairneſs, but renounce them both at the very next ſtep."

I think myſelf happy, that I may anſwer for myſelf, and the public ſhall ſee how I renounce *candour* and *fairneſs*. He gives the following for evidence. "For (ſays he) you make me to maintain that manifeſt unbelievers are proper and goſpel ſubjects of baptiſm. *Theſe are your words again. I have ſaid no ſuch thing.*" This is Mr. A.'s accuſation: and I appeal to the Bible, to ſtubborn facts, and to common ſenſe, if he have not ſaid the whole which I have laid to his charge; and whether he have not denied the plain matter of fact, that he might excuſe himſelf, and charge me with renouncing *candour* and *fairneſs?*

Says Mr. A. "What I maintain is, that the infants of viſible believers are goſpel ſubjects of baptiſm."

We appeal to the Bible, if infants of viſible believers, as well as others, be not *manifeſtly unbelievers?* That informs

us, that man is born like a *wild aſs's colt*. It does not exempt believers' children any more than others. Beſides ſays our Saviour, Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God. Is Mr. A. an Arminian, or a Weſleyan Methodiſt, and ſo has he adopted the inventions of men to pervert theſe texts? If he have, ſtill I will ſhow the public, that he has denied a plain fact, to get rid of a difficulty. For, in the ſame page, and in the preceding, he, ſpeaking of the jailer, and of his houſehold, charges me with *preſumptuous comments*, which, ſays he, are calculated to make your unlearned readers conclude, that the *jailer's houſehold* are ſaid to be *believers* as well as himſelf. Whereas the *evidence* from the uſe of this participle is *quite the other way*." Here Mr. A. informs us, that the jailer's houſehold were baptized, when they did not believe; and charges me with preſumptuous comments, becauſe I held with the plain Scripture account of the matter, that the jailer rejoiced, believing in God with all his houſe. Mr. A. holds that the houſehold of the jailer was baptized, while they were unbelievers, and that this is a juſtification of his and his brethren's practice. Now I appeal to the common ſenſe of all men, if *unbelieving houſeholds*, or if the *unbelieving members* of a *manifeſtly unbelieving houſehold* be not *manifeſt unbelievers*. If they be, then Mr. A. holds, that *manifeſt unbelievers* are *proper* and *goſpel ſubjects* of *baptiſm*; or elſe he charges the Apoſtles with baptizing improper and ungoſpel ſubjects. For he holds, that they baptized ſuch, and charges me with *preſumptuous comments*, where I ſhow, that they did not baptize ſuch unfit and improper ſubjects. I now appeal to every man, who has common ſenſe, whether Mr. A. has not contradicted plain matter of fact; denied his own ſentiment, and charged me unjuſtly; and all this to get rid of a difficulty into which his errors have brought him; and whether he does not hold to the unſcriptural and popiſh ſentiment, that *manifeſt unbelievers* are *proper* and *goſpel ſubjects* of *baptiſm*?

2. In page 21, ſays Mr. A. to me, "In p. 17, you make a very unfair ſtatement. You ſay, 'Beſides it is your ſentiment, that baptiſm is to be obſerved, or received, when we are infants; when we know nothing about it. How much ſerious reverence and conſcientiouſneſs infants have, we know not!' Is this fair? Is it honeſt? You have omitted to mention our *adult* baptiſms entirely." Truly, I have omitted it, but will now mention it, and expoſe the whole buſineſs.

1. Mr. A.'s ſentiment is exactly as I ſat it down; but I did not expoſe the whole. For his ſentiment is, as I obſerved, that baptiſm is to be received, when we are infants, when we know nothing about it. He holds, that this ought to be the caſe univerſally, in all Chriſtian lands. For it is his ſentiment, that all parents, where the goſpel is preached, ought to be believers, when their children are born; and that all ſuch children ought to be baptized or ſprinkled in their infancy. Thus he holds, that, in goſpel lands, all ought to be baptized before they believe; and that none ſhould be taught till after they are baptized. Juſt the contrary from what Chriſt commanded, and the Scriptures every where teach. Thus we ſee, could his error have its perfect work, how ſeriouſly they would reverence, and how conſcientiouſly they would obſerve the goſpel ordinance of baptiſm. They would ſo reverence it, and ſo conſcientiouſly obſerve it, that not a ſingle believer in the whole nation ſhould have the privilege to ſubmit to it according to the expreſs command of our Saviour. No one ſhould be taught, and then baptized; but all ſhould be baptized, and then taught.

But, 2d. Says he, "You have omitted our adult baptiſms entirely." I have; but will be faulty in this particular no longer. Now, for their adult baptiſms. What are they? The reader ſhall hear, and then will never forget them. Their adult baptiſms are, when a maſter of a family is converted, his houſehold of adult impenitents muſt be baptized as well as the believing maſter. This is Mr. A.'s principle, and if he will not acknowledge it, I will prove it to him. He tells us, that the Philippian jailer believed, that his houſehold did not, and yet, that they were proper ſubjects of baptiſm; and that the baptiſms of ſuch unbelieving houſeholds are their adult baptiſms. Theſe are not juſt his words, but theſe are his ſentiments, not deduced from his principles, but from his declarations and aſſertions, as the reader may ſee by conſulting his Letters to the author. Beſides, this is juſt in agreement with their principles. If they deny this, they give up their principles, and ſtand upon nothing. They have no other deſcription of adult baptiſms belonging to their ſyſtem; unleſs in ſome rare inſtances, a heathen bachelor or maid, without a family, might be converted, and then ſuch an adult might be admitted to ſprinkling.

The public are now deſired to judge, with what propriety Mr. A. aſſerted, in his firſt Letters, ſaying, "We as

ſeriouſly reverence, and conſcientiouſly obſerve the goſpel ordinance of baptiſm, as do the Baptiſts." Upon this, I obſerved to him, that it was his ſentiment, that this ordinance is to be obſerved or received when we are infants, when we can know nothing about it. How much ſerious reverence and conſcientiouſneſs infants have, we know not. To this he replies, "*Is this fair?* Is it honeſt?" Yes, and I appeal to the Bible and to the common ſenſe of the public, if the whole truth, fairly laid open, would not have made him appear more erroneous, and given his ſentiments a worſe hue? But as he hath ſaid, "Is this fair? Is it honeſt?" he is now deſired to inform the public how much ſerious reverence, and conſcientiouſneſs the infidel, or unbelieving houſeholds of converted maſters, or parents have? Have unbelieving adults, whoſe hearts are hardened by experience in wickedneſs, any more ſerious reverence or conſcientiouſneſs, in ſubmitting to baptiſm, at the command of their maſter, or of the officiating prieſt, than have infants of a day old? Suppoſe the jail-keeper in Worceſter be converted, and his family, or houſehold, conſiſt of half a dozen of unbelieving adults, with how much ſerious reverence and conſcientiouſneſs would they obſerve the goſpel ordinance of baptiſm? Should they ſubmit to be ſprinkled, or partially waſhed, or have water poured upon them, or have water applied to them in ſome other way, which Mr. A. might fancy to be goſpel baptiſm, then might the ſpectators behold one of his adult baptiſms, which he ſays I have omitted entirely. I confeſs, did I hold to ſuch adult baptiſms, and did my opponent neglect to mention them, I would never complain of ſuch omiſſion, unleſs my judgment were what it is not, or I wiſhed my ſentiments to be had in everlaſting reproach.

Let the Bible doctrine of goſpel baptiſm, let the Bible facts, relating to goſpel baptiſm, let common ſenſe, as to goſpel baptiſm, judge whether Mr. A.'s adult baptiſms be any way preferable before the heathen rites, practiſed in honour of Jupiter, or of other heathen gods! The Bible knows nothing about ſuch adult baptiſms, as he and his brethren advocate. The fact is, they have loſt the idea of goſpel baptiſm, and of the ſubjects too; and now conſider themſelves juſtified in contending earneſtly for the commandments and traditions of men.

3. Says Mr. A. page 26, "There are ſome men, ſir, who have not a jot of oil, nor a grain of balm, in their veſſels, who yet have infinite zeal about things of compar-

ative indifference. The leſs determinate evidence there is, the more poſitive do they ſeem to be." By the connexion in which this paſſage is introduced, it is manifeſt that the Baptiſts are intended. But we appeal to the public, if Mr. A. have not miſtaken their characteriſtics. "Infinite zeal (ſays he) about things of comparative indifference." Who more zealous than Mr. A. and his brethren, about baptiſm? Yet they, eſpecially he, confeſs it to be of ſuch comparative indifference, that it may be adminiſtered at one time, or at another time, or at no time; and that it may be in *one way*, or in *another* way, or in *almoſt any* way. It is not thus with the Baptiſts. "The leſs determinate evidence (ſays he) there is, the more poſitive do they ſeem to be." Nothing can better apply to Mr. A. than does this; for I ſhowed him, in my Letters, that he had no determinate evidence, nor even probable evidence, in favour of his errors; yet he is, if poſſible, more poſitive than before. "They plant themſelves (ſays he) on an elevation enveloped in vapours, and yet fancy that they *only* have the ſeeing faculty." We can ſee, that to be baptized *in* the river, is not to be ſprinkled *out of it*. We can ſee, that to have our *bodies waſhed* with pure or ſimple water, is a different thing from having a *little put* upon our *faces*. We can ſee, that for converts to be baptized when they hear the word gladly, is not the ſame as to be ſprinkled before they can underſtand one word from another. We can ſee ſome difference between burying believers with Chriſt in the very ſolemn and ſignificant ordinance of baptiſm, and the ſprinkling or pouring water on adult infidels becauſe their maſters believe. We do not claim excluſive poſſeſſion of the ſeeing faculty: we believe Mr. A. has it, but with relation to goſpel baptiſm, will not uſe it.

Again, ſays he, "They make a thouſand times more fuſs about the mode of a thing, about converſion to that mode, and the putting in practice that mode, waiting months to give it publicity, and ſending from Dan to Beerſheba for agents to be employed about it, than if all the inhabitants of Louiſiana were converted to Chriſtianity."!! This we believe to be a very raſh untruth, of which Mr. A. muſt repent in the preſent or future world.

4. The public will excuſe me, though in this place I may preſent them with a quotation of unuſual length. In my judgment, it is expedient, in the preſent debate, to be liberal in quotations. My reaſons are two: one is, that my opponents ſhall have no plauſible objection to make,

that their ſentiment is not fairly ſtated; the other is, that then very many of my readers will diſcover for themſelves the fallacy and weakneſs of my opponents' arguments, by inſpection, before they are particularly expoſed. It would pleaſe me well to be uſed in the ſame way; then would the readers, on both ſides of the queſtion, poſſeſs a more generous opportunity to know the truth: but thoſe who contend with me will uſe their pleaſure in this matter.

The quotation is in pages 37 and 38, and in the following words:—

"The ſecond proof which I advanced againſt your doctrine of the excluſive meaning of the word *laptizō*, is the paſſage in 1 Cor. x. 2, And were all baptized unto Moſes in the cloud and in the ſea. Here your reply is founded altogether on the force of the prepoſitions *under*, *through*, and *in*. Prepoſitions are every thing with you. But how are we to underſtand them? Beyond all doubt, the declaration of the apoſtle is founded upon the fact in the Moſaic narrative. This you have not dared to look in the face. You ſkulk under prepoſitions, in the hope they will ſhield you from the eyes of thoſe who are able to detect your ſophiſms. But you muſt come out. You have committed yourſelf before the public. You have impoſed on the credulity of your unlearned readers, by indefenſible aſſertions, which you do not ſupport, and muſt be rebuked for your temerity. This text alone is ſufficient to confound all thoſe aſſertions. The apoſtle ſpeaks of the whole multitude of Iſrael, and comprehends every individual. All our fathers. Now will you undertake to ſay before the public, that all theſe fathers, individually, were immerſed in the cloud, when the ſacred narrative ſays, Exod. xiv. 19, And the pillar of the cloud went from before their face and ſtood behind them; and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Iſrael? Will you ſay that they were individually immerſed in the ſea, when the ſacred narrative is, verſe 22, And the children of Iſrael went into the midſt of the ſea upon dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left. If by the ſea be meant the bed of the waters, that was dry ground under their feet; if the waters themſelves, they were on each ſide of the congregation as a wall."

I will here, in the firſt place, give the public a particular ſtatement of the facts which cauſed the good man to ſpeak ſo ſmartly, and to aſſert things ſo roundly, and then I ſhall

endeavour to expoſe his errors, with which the quotation is crowded.

The accurate ſtatement now follows. In his firſt Letters to me, page 57, his words are, "Another caſe in which the word *baptizō* is undeniably uſed to convey an idea entirely different from that of complete immerſion, and which, for ſome reaſon beſt known to yourſelf, you have thought proper to omit, occurs in 1 Cor. x. 2, And were all baptized (*ebaptizanto*) unto Moſes in the cloud and in the ſea." To this I replied, page 42, thus:—"Here let Paul explain himſelf, or let the preceding verſe explain what this means. The preceding verſe is, Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye ſhould be *ignorant*, how that all our fathers were *under* the *cloud*, and all paſſed *through* the ſea. Then follows verſe 2, And were all baptized unto Moſes *in* the cloud and *in* the ſea. How does this undeniably convey an idea entirely different from that of complete immerſion? It looks to me ſomewhat like the ſame idea. It certainly has the appearance of being overwhelmed, or completely encompaſſed. They were all *under* the cloud, they all paſſed *through* the ſea; they were baptized *in* the cloud and *in* the ſea. This your undeniable evidence againſt the idea of immerſion, appears, upon the very face of it, to favour, ſtrongly to favour, the very truth which you brought it to deſtroy."

We will now attend to the errors which he hath given us within the limits of one paragraph.

1. "Here (ſays he) your reply is founded altogether upon the force of prepoſitions."

Anſwer. The force of my reply was founded upon the words of the apoſtle; I was diſpoſed to let him explain himſelf. Moſes ſaid nothing about baptiſm, nor of the fathers being baptized unto him, either in the cloud or in the ſea; but as Paul had brought forward this manner of expreſſion, and as he only had thus done, I conſidered it but reaſonable to allow Paul to explain himſelf. But as Mr. A. contrary from all reaſonable men, will not ſuffer a man, even the apoſtle, to explain himſelf, and treats me not very civilly for my referring the matter to Paul, we will therefore hear Mr. A.

2. Says he, "Prepoſitions are every thing with you. But how are we to underſtand them? Beyond all doubt, the declaration of the apoſtle is founded upon the fact in the Moſaic narrative. This you have not dared to look in the face."

Anſwer. Is it with me, or with the apoſtle, he is contending? I have made no prepoſitions. I added none to thoſe uſed by the apoſtle. I juſt ſet to view the text, as Paul delivered it. "Beyond all doubt, (ſays Mr. A.) theſe prepoſitions are to be underſtood by the fact in the Moſaic narrative." Suppoſe this to be true, yet is not Paul's expoſition of Moſes's narrative as good as Mr. A.'s? But, ſays he, "This (the Moſaic narrative) you have not dared to look in the face." This is Mr. A.'s ſheer miſtake; for I truſt, through grace given unto me, there is not a ſingle text in all the good word of God, but I dare look it in the face, and am willing to underſtand its full import, with a deſire to obey it.

I ſhall now endeavour to look his two formidable texts full in the face. The firſt is in Exod. xiv. 19. And the pillar of the cloud went from before their face and ſtood behind them; and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Iſrael." This explains one part of what Paul ſays, namely, That *all our fathers* were *under* the *cloud.* The pillar of cloud went from before their face and ſtood behind them. Then it paſſed *over all of them,* as it paſſed from front to rear. This may *figuratively repreſent* a *tomb-ſtone,* which lies *over* the *whole grave.* Very well; and what is the other text which I dare not look in the face? It is this, verſe 22, And the children of Iſrael went into the midſt of the ſea upon dry ground, and the *waters* were a *wall* unto *them* on the *right hand* and on the *left.* This gave Paul an occaſion to ſay, And all paſſed through the ſea. Here is the Moſaic narrative. He found that the ſea, or the *waters* of the ſea, were a wall on *each ſide* of *all the Iſraelites.* Put theſe walls and the figurative tomb-ſtone together, they would be ſomething of a *figurative tomb;* there would be ſome reſemblance. Hence Paul might, in a figurative way of ſpeaking, without offending any, except the oppoſers of goſpel baptiſm, ſay, And were all baptized unto Moſes *in* the cloud and *in* the ſea. The cloud and ſea, taken together, encompaſſed them, or overwhelmed them, as they were following Moſes their leader; and in the mean time they experienced a very memorable deliverance, which, as a figure, points out the deliverance from ſin, or the ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt, even as water baptiſm does. Now we appeal to the Bible, to the ſtubborn facts related, to common ſenſe, to any thing and to every thing which will ſpeak the truth, if Mr. A. had not better have done nothing in defence of his errors, than to bring ſuch

texts as theſe to the conſideration of the public. For does not this very matter look a little like immerſion, the goſpel baptiſm? And where is there the leaſt reſemblance of his popiſh notion of pouring or ſprinkling? It would be ridiculous to ſay, that all the Iſraelites were ſprinkled, or had water poured upon them, either from a pillar of fire or from the fixed walls of water on each ſide. This is Mr. A.'s artillery, by which he has, if we may believe his own words, confounded all my aſſertions, and *taken away my defenſive armour;* or, this is ſufficient to do it.

3. But, ſays he, "You *ſkulk* under prepoſitions, in the hope they will ſhield you from the eyes of thoſe who are able to detect your ſophiſms." The public will judge whether I have *ſkulked* under prepoſitions, or under any thing elſe, or whether I have any occaſion to for the preſent. But from what does Mr. A. ſuppoſe I am *ſkulking?* He plainly tells me, "From the eyes of thoſe who are able to detect my ſophiſms." I appeal to every impartial reader of his Letters, whether he has, in either of his pamphlets detected any of my ſophiſms, or ſhown me to be guilty of one. He has told me in the public hearing, page 43, "*That he pitied me,*" and in page 20, "*that he would be merciful and not expoſe, too much, the nakedneſs of the land,*" &c. But where has he proved me guilty of a ſophiſm, or any conſiderable miſtake, or one miſrepreſentation, or one *trifling, unmanly* argument?

4. But, ſays he, "*You muſt come out. You have committed yourſelf before the public. You have impoſed on the credulity of your unlearned readers, by indefenſible aſſertions, which you do not ſupport, and muſt be rebuked for your temerity.*"

Anſwer. I confeſs I feel myſelf happy, that I live in a land of freedom, where I am not afraid to come out, and deſire Mr. A. to make good his charge. Let him ſhow, if he be able, in what I have committed myſelf before the public. Let him ſhow, if he can, for I invite him to expoſe me, and I aſk of *him* neither *pity* nor mercy, ſo as to keep back one truth, by which he can expoſe my impoſition upon the credulity of my unlearned readers, by ſo much as one indefenſible aſſertion. If I have not done this in a ſingle inſtance, but do ſupport my aſſertions, and Mr. A. be not able to gainſay them, but by ſuch weak and beggarly arguments as *pictures* in his Bible, calling to the ſpirits of dead men, or telling ſtories about a Baptiſt miniſter's praying too loud. Then I aſk for what *temerity* I am to be rebuked by him. Mr. A. ought to remember, that we do not live where

the mouths of the baptized church are ſtopped by priſons, fires, racks and gibbets. Truth begins to break forth with brightneſs. The God of the baptized church will defend her, and his plagues begin to be poured upon Antichriſt; and ſuch of God's people as do not hear his voice, and come out of her ſpeedily, may receive not a little of theſe plagues.

5. For a general anſwer to Mr. A.'s reply to my expoſing his erroneous notions of *diaphorois baptiſmois* Heb. ix. 10. the public are referred to my Letters to him, p. 43, 44, and 45. But as he conſiders himſelf to have gained ſome advantage from the uſe of the word *diaphorois* in a different connexion, ſome ſmall attention muſt be paid to it. His words are, "The Greek word is uſed but in one other place in the New-Teſtament; that is in Rom. xii. 6. Having therefore gifts differing, *diaphora*, according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy or miniſtry, &c. Theſe gifts, ſays he, are *different in kind.*"

The following obſervations will ſhow, that the text, Rom. xii. 6. and the word *diaphora* as there uſed, will afford him no help.

1. For, to ſay the leaſt, it is a very doubtful thing, whether the gifts, *differing* according to the grace given, be *different kinds* of gifts, or *different ſpecies* of the *ſame kind* of ſpiritual gifts. Indeed to me it is no doubtful caſe at all. For there are different kinds of gifts of the Spirit. Such as *gifts eſſentially* connected with the *ſinner's ſalvation*, *miraculous gifts*, and *edifying gifts*. Thoſe gifts of which Paul is ſpeaking, Rom. xii. 6, 7. are of the latter kind, and different ſpecies of that kind. This text is therefore nothing to his purpoſe.

2. But grant it, if he chooſe, that the gifts ſpoken of are different in kind; yet it will not follow, as he ſuppoſes, that the ſame adjective, in Heb. ix. 10. muſt mean different kinds of baptiſms. It might in one caſe mean different ſpecies of the ſame kind, and in another different kinds. So it would prove nothing to his purpoſe, even ſuppoſe it meant juſt as he ſays.

3. But, ſuppoſe farther, that the uſe of the word *diaphora*, Rom. xii. 6. would prove, that in Heb. ix. 10. the apoſtle is ſpeaking of different kinds of baptiſms, then it would confound Mr. A.'s whole argument from the text, as to goſpel baptiſm, or worſe; for then he muſt ſay one of theſe two things; either, firſt, that it hath nothing to

do with goſpel baptiſm ; or ſecondly, that there are different kinds of goſpel baptiſms. If he ſay the firſt, that it hath nothing to do with goſpel baptiſm, then it would confound his argument, for then he would all this while have been arguing from a topic which hath nothing to do with the ſubject. If he ſay the other, that there are different kinds of goſpel baptiſms, then he does worſe than give up his whole argument ; for he implicitly charges the apoſtle with falſehood, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt with impoſition and negligence. He implicitly charges the apoſtle with falſehood ; for Paul exhorts the Epheſian Chriſtians to unity, and uſes as one argument to this, that there is but one Lord, one faith, *one baptiſm*. Now if there be *different kinds* of goſpel baptiſms, Paul muſt have ſpoken falſely, with a deſign, no doubt, to deceive. But this is not the worſt which Mr. A. does. He implicitly charges our Lord Jeſus Chriſt with impoſition and negligence ; for our Lord knew how to ſpeak in ſuch plain language, that his poor, ignorant and devout followers might underſtand him. But inſtead of doing ſo, (if Mr. A. be correct) he ſpeaks in ſuch ambiguous and uncert in language, that for ſeveral of the firſt centuries, no one underſtood him, and none were certain that they underſtood him to mean, or that he did mean, by goſpel baptiſm any thing ſhort of immerſion, till *Pope Clement* the Fifth, in the fourteenth century, aroſe and *informed* the world, that *ſprinkling* ſhould be *valid* and goſpel baptiſm : And indeed had it not been for Mr. Auſtin of Worceſter, the Chriſtian world would not have known, to this day, that there were different kinds of goſpel baptiſms. Thus according to Mr. A. our bleſſed Lord and Saviour (ſhocking to ſay) has impoſed upon his ignorant followers. Not only ſo, but the compaſſionate and all-wiſe Saviour hath given the law of goſpel baptiſm in ſuch equivocal and uncertain terms, that ſo ſoon as his followers come to know any thing about letters, they muſt be contending about what it is. For it could not but be expected that ſome of the more ignorant ones would contend for the old way which was practiſed, with few exceptions, for fifteen hundred years. Yes, and not only ſo, but Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, and John, and Paul, and Peter, have agreed together in keeping us *ignorant*. For wherever and whenever they have ſpoken of goſpel baptiſm, they have uniformly ſpoken of it, when they have mentioned any explanatory circumſtance about it, as though it were one thing, and as though that one thing were im-

merſion. Mat. iii. 6. tells us, that the penitents were baptized in *Jordan.* Mark tells us, i. 5. that they were baptized *in the river* of Jordan. Luke informs us, that when the ordinance of baptiſm was adminiſtered, they not only came *to* the *water*, but went *into* it. Acts viii. John gives us to underſtand, that baptiſm was adminiſtered in a certain place, *becauſe* there was *much water there.* John iii. 23. Paul tells us, that as many as were baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, were buried and raiſed with Chriſt in the ordinance. Rom. vi. 3, 4. Col. ii. 12. Peter tells us that baptiſm is a figure of our ſalvation, anſwering to the figure, the ark, in which Noah was ſaved. Chap. iii. 21. of his firſt epiſtle. Now all theſe have agreed together to deceive us, if it be a deception, and to make us, poor, ignorant creatures, who have not come to *maturity* of *judgment*, *correctneſs* of *knowledge*, and *ſtability* of *faith*, believe, that goſpel baptiſm is but one thing, and that one thing is immerſion, in the name of the Father, &c. Whereas they have not ſaid ſo much as one word about *ſprinkling or pouring* being the matter of goſpel baptiſm, or given ſo much as one circumſtance which makes it look as though ſprinkling or pouring were ever either commanded or practiſed. Indeed had not Pope Clement, in the year 1305, have told us that ſprinkling was valid, ſcriptural, goſpel baptiſm, no Chriſtian for the firſt eighteen hundred years of Chriſtianity, would have known that it was ſo; and all might have proceeded on in their ignorance, and have believed, that as there were but one Lord, one faith, ſo there was but *one valid, ſcriptural, goſpel baptiſm.* In much the ſame ſtate of ignorance might the Chriſtian world have now been, with reſpect to another important matter, had not Mr. A. been raiſed up to inſtruct us, that there are *different kinds* of goſpel baptiſms. Does not this buſineſs of Mr. A. do worſe than confound his argument? Does it not make his Popiſh baptiſms look worſe than it would for him to give up his argument from Heb. ix. 10? In ſhort, had he not better have taken my advice, if he would maintain his ſide, to ſay nothing about it?

6. We will now attend to Mr. A.'s laſt and moſt formidable argument againſt immerſion, as being the only goſpel baptiſm. As this *laſt* and *main argument* is but the *old Antichriſtian* argument, with a new dreſs, it might receive but little notice, were it not that by repeatedly turning it over before the public, they may, one after another, ſee the *mark* of the beaſt upon it. Another conſideration may

render it adviſable to pay ſome attention to it ; and it is this : This their *firſt* and *laſt* argument is the only argument for which they have even a plauſible pretence. It was the principal argument which Cyprian in the third century uſed for ſprinkling, or affuſion ; and it is the laſt which Mr. A. uſes in the nineteenth. Cyprian doubted its validity ; but Mr. A. is ſomewhat confident that it will anſwer.

We will now hear his argument.

Says he, page 40, 41, 42, "To conclude this part of the controverſy on the mode of baptiſm, omitting the much that might be ſaid in favour of ſprinkling and affuſion, as both warranted in the ſcriptures, I will content myſelf with one remark ; and that is upon the *impracticability* of the ordinance according to your account of it. In beſieged cities, where there are thouſands and hundreds of thouſands of people ; in ſandy deſerts, like ſome parts of Africa, Arabia and Paleſtine, and in ſome northern regions, where the ſtreams and the ponds, if there be any, are ſhut up by impenetrable ices ; and in ſevere and extenſive droughts, like that which took place in the time of Ahab ; ſufficiency of water for animal ſubſiſtence is almoſt unprocurable. In ſome caſes it is entirely ſo ; inſomuch that millions of human beings have ſuffered great diſtreſs by thirſt. Now ſuppoſe God ſhould, according to the predictions of the prophets, pour out plentiful effuſions of his Spirit, ſo that all the inhabitants of one of theſe regions or cities ſhall be born in a day ; upon your hypotheſis there is an abſolute impoſſibility they ſhould be born into the kingdom, while there is this ſcarcity of water ; and this may laſt for months ; yea, as long as they live. And theſe thouſands and hundreds of thouſands of Chriſtians, muſt remain all this while, and perhaps die, without having once the conſolation of ſupping with their Redeemer. Now it muſt require very clear evidence to convince me, that the eſſence of baptiſm lies in that which, in ſo many caſes of this kind, muſt defeat the very deſign of it ; and that baptiſm is ever an indiſpenſable prerequiſite to the Lord's Supper. This moreover is altogether unlike what we find on the face of apoſtolic practice."

Thus ſays Mr. A. in the light of the nineteenth century ; and what does it all come to ? The following remark may ſhow.

1. The whole of it is *argumentum ad paſſiones*, that is, an argument addreſſed to the paſſions and prejudices of men.

2. We muſt make Chriſt's poſitive inſtitutions bow to our convenience juſt when it ſuits us, becauſe in ſome poſſible caſes, which have never yet happened, and never will, we could not be baptized according to the command and pattern given, with reſpect to that ordinance.

3. God may, *not* according to the predictions of the prophets, give a great rain from the *upper* ſprings, and ſhut up the *lower* ones, ſo that a nation or city may be born in a day, and there be, at the time, not water ſufficient to baptize them, therefore baptiſm cannot always mean baptiſm, that is, immerſion; but muſt ſometimes mean rantiſm, that is, *ſprinkling*.

4. If thouſands and hundreds of thouſands ſhould be born, on that very day in which they had ſpent the laſt of the water, which the city, or ſandy deſert contained, what would Mr. A. do then? Would he not do as ſome of the popiſh monks are ſaid to have done, baptize them with ſand?

5. But there is another difficulty. Suppoſe their vines ſhould not yield their fruit, what would he do then, as to the ſecond goſpel ordinance? No doubt he would ſubſtitute water, or ſome other liquid, if he had any; for if he may, to ſuit the times, change the very eſſence of one ordinance, he may, no doubt, change the element of another. But ſuppoſe he had no ſubſtitute, ſo that it would be utterly impoſſible to ſup with his Redeemer; then Mr. A. would, if conſiſtent with himſelf, conclude, that Chriſt never intended to command the real uſe of bread and wine, or any other material elements in the ordinance of the ſupper; for the want of bread and wine may happen as often and to as great multitudes, as the want of water. Then he might conclude thus:

"Now it muſt require *very clear evidence to convince me*, that the *eſſence* of the *Lord's ſupper lies in that which*, in *ſo many caſes* of *this kind*, *muſt defeat* the very deſign of it." Thus Mr. A. with the very ſame argument, by which he condemns my principles, juſtifies the Quakers. Juſt ſo far as his argument is good in one caſe, it is the ſame in the other. His argument is either good for nothing, becauſe it proves too much, or elſe it proves juſt enough, and the Quakers are in the right.

6. The "*ſo many caſes of this kind*," which he ſuppoſes muſt defeat the very deſign of baptiſm, are mere imagination; not one of them has ever occurred, or is ever like to.

7. But his concluding words are particularly noticeable; they are theſe: "This moreover is altogether unlike what we find on the face of apoſtolic practice."

If he mean, that what he hath been ſaying, and that his whole argument is altogether unlike what we find on the face of apoſtolic practice, it is a ſolemn truth. For we do, indeed, find not a word of his popiſh and wicked argument and practice in any of the writings of thoſe holy men. We appeal to the Bible, to ſtubborn facts, and to the common ſenſe of all mankind, if there be, in any one text of the whole Bible, where it ſpeaks of goſpel times and goſpel ordinances, ſo much as a ſingle ſhade of likeneſs between the apoſtolic practice and Mr. A.'s argument, and the errors which he would ſupport by it? But if he intend by his cloſing aſſertion, that his argument and tenets are altogether like what we find on the face of apoſtolic practice, then his aſſertion is very illy founded, and deſerves a worſe name than I chooſe to give it. But this I will ſay, it may, at leaſt, be numbered among his other great miſtakes, and the argument itſelf may increaſe the number of his weak ones.

A man of ſenſe muſt indeed have a miſerable ſide, to be compelled to uſe ſuch miſerable arguments in the defence of it. I can bear with tolerable patience to hear Mr. A. accuſe me of repetitions, for I had rather be guilty of a thouſand, than to have one ſuch argument as this juſtly laid to my account.

7. Were it not for the importance of the preſent controverſy, I might be apprehenſive ſome of my readers would gladly diſmiſs the remaining errors of Mr. A.; but when it is conſidered that his errors, generally ſpeaking, belong to a great claſs of men, and that ſome, who are with him in them, are not only men of ſenſe and erudition, but of piety too; and beſides, when it is conſidered, that where his errors are expoſed, many may have them, and more may take heed not to imbibe them; then it will appear that too much cannot be done to bring them into their deſired diſrepect. I ſhall therefore ſet another cluſter of them to public view. In the firſt place we ſhall ſet them down, as Mr. A. has given them to us in his 43d page, and then expoſe them individually. They are contained in his words which follow. "There is but little hazard, that your moſt partial readers will be quieted by the new invention of yours, as much at variance with common ſenſe, and with the explanations of your Baptiſt brethren, as with

the ſcriptures, that the covenant of circumciſion is but a token of the covenant of grace. That it is but a mere law, and that circumciſion itſelf is this covenant. This is twiſting and turning indeed. 'The covenant of circumciſion equal, (ſay you) every man-child being circumciſed; every man-child being circumciſed equal, the circumciſing of the fleſh of their foreſkin; the circumciſing of the fleſh of their foreſkin equal, the token of the covenant between God and Abraham; here the token of the covenant betwixt God and Abraham equal, the covenant of circumciſion: for it is a well known axiom, that things that are equal to the ſame are equal to one another.' This algebraic equation, my friend, *in pity to you*, I will leave under a ſimple quotation."

Some of his errors contained in this quotation are,

1. His calling it an invention of mine, to conſider the covenant of circumciſion as but a *token* of the *covenant* of grace. This is far from being an invention of mine. For ſaith the Lord, Gen. xvii. 9, 10, 11. "Thou ſhalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy ſeed after thee, in their generations. This is my *covenant* which ye ſhall keep between me and you and thy ſeed after thee; *every man-child* among you ſhall be *circumciſed*; and ye ſhall *circumciſe* the *fleſh* of your *foreſkin*, and it ſhall be a *token* of the *covenant betwixt me* and *you*." In the 13th verſe, God, ſpeaking manifeſtly of this ſame covenant of circumciſion, ſaith, My *covenant* ſhall be in *your fleſh*, for an everlaſting covenant." Alſo in verſe 14. ſpeaking of the ſame covenant, the Lord ſaith, "And the uncircumciſed man-child *whoſe fleſh* of his foreſkin is not circumciſed, that ſoul ſhall be cut off from his people, *he* hath *broken my covenant*." Does Mr. A. ſuppoſe, that the uncircumciſed man-child had broken the covenant of grace? If he do, the ſcriptures ſay no ſuch thing. He had broken the covenant of circumciſion, or the law, or covenant of circumciſion had not been obſerved with relation to him. Thus we ſee my invention is the good old Bible account of the matter. However, it is not to be wondered at, that he ſhould wiſh to get rid of this matter by calling it a new invention of mine. For this good old Bible account deſtroys his anti-chriſtian notion of putting children into the covenant of grace by baptizing them. For all the plea which he has for this ſuperſtitious buſineſs, is, that Abraham and his ſeed put their children, as he and his brethren erroneouſly ſuppoſe, into that covenant, by circumciſing them. But this Bible account of

circumcision removes this part of the *mystery* of iniquity; and shows that Abraham's children were not put into the covenant of grace by being circumcised, and so it destroys the notion of judaizing Christians putting theirs in by baptism.

2. Another error in the above quotation is, his representing what he calls my new invention, as being at variance with common sense, and with the explanations of my Baptist brethren, and with the Bible.

As to the explanations of my baptized brethren, I know not what they are, not recollecting, or having never seen any of them. Yet, finding that my invention appears to harmonize perfectly with the Bible representation, and knowing that the Bible and common sense agree, and also knowing that my baptized brethren generally agree with both, I conclude, that I am not greatly at variance with either of the three.

3. His next error in this cluster is his declaration, that my considering the covenant of circumcision to be but a token of the covenant of grace, and that circumcision itself is this covenant, is *twisting and turning indeed.*

I appeal to the Bible and common sense, if I have not gone side by side with both of them. If I have, there is neither *twisting* nor *turning* about it, save it twists his erroneous sentiments, and *turns* his *notion* of putting his *graceless* children into the covenant of grace, by sprinkling them, out of credit, and makes it appear as it should, an invention of man. This is what I call, going right forward.

4. The other error, which I shall here mention, is his unreasonable pity towards me. It was so great, that he has left us all in ignorance of what the covenant of circumcision is. The public would have been under great obligation to him, had he pitied me less, and so had given them a plain view, or clear account of the covenant of circumcision. But as the matter is, the public must still be uninformed, or else take my new invention, the good old Bible representation of this matter.

8. Another noticeable error of Mr. A.'s is his implicit denial, that the Pædobaptist theory is clogged with the absurd principle, and practice too, so far as their principle and practice agree, that if a South-Carolina planter be converted, his household are disciples of course, and are to be baptized, though his slaves be 5000. This is just their absurd principle and practice too, so far as they are consistent with themselves: and Mr. A. has implicitly denied

it, and as he confeſſes it to be a clog to their theory, if true, and alſo an abſurdity, it appears to me expedient, in this place, to prove the fact againſt their theory, and thus to fix an abſurdity upon their practice, and clog it as much as I can. But in the firſt place, I will give the public his attempt to get off.

In page 46, his words are theſe: ſays he to me, "In page 62, you ſay, reſpecting Abraham's houſehold, 'But let it be more or leſs, one thing is certain, they were all to be circumciſed on account of Abraham's being a good man, full of faith.' That which is certain can eaſily be proved. Proof is not furniſhed; and it is believed never can be furniſhed. Yet you would make uſe of this aſſertion to clog the Pædobaptiſt theory with the abſurdity in practice, that if one of us ſhould convert a South-Carolina planter, into a diſciple, we of courſe make diſciples of all his ſlaves, though they were 5000."

Thus ſays Mr. A.; and now what I wiſh is to prove this abſurdity upon his theory, and thus clog it as much as I can, and, if poſſible, ſpoil the ill-gotten credit of this judaizing theory, and ſtop its progreſs.

My arguments, by which to accompliſh this, are two.

1. They take the law of circumciſion as their example and juſtification. Their principle is founded, or built upon the law of circumciſion. This law is recorded Gen. xvii. 12. Thus, "He that is eight days old ſhall be circumciſed among you, every man-child in your generations; he that is born in the houſe, or *bought with money* of *any ſtranger*, which is not of thy ſeed." This is the law, and if the reader wiſh for any explanation, it is furniſhed to his hand in verſe 23, where Abraham's obedience to it is thus expreſſed. "And Abraham took Iſhmael his ſon, and all that were born in his houſe, and *all that were bought with money, every male among the men of Abraham's houſe*, and circumciſed the fleſh of their foreſkin, in the ſelf-ſame day, as God had ſaid unto him." Here is the law, obedience and example, which Pædobaptiſts profeſs to follow, and on this account, and in this particular, they are juſtly ſtyled, Judaizing Chriſtians. But my preſent buſineſs is to ſhow, that their ſentiment, or principle, leads them to baptize 50 or 500, or 5000 ſlaves, belonging to a South-Carolina planter, provided he be chriſtianized. My argument is this. Abraham had many ſervants born in his houſe, and *bought with his money*, years before the covenant of circumciſion was given. He had 318 trained ſoldiers or ſervants

born in his houſe, and how many bought with his money we know not. He might have many more, before the day of their circumciſion. For afterwards he was called a *mighty prince*, Gen. xxiii. 6. Now all theſe, which Abraham poſſeſſed on the day of circumciſion, let them be 50, or 500, or 5000, were all circumciſed, on account of Abraham's being a good man, full of faith, or on account of the covenant of circumciſion, which was made with him. The principle of the Pædobaptiſts is founded on this very buſineſs, and is meant to ſquare with the covenant of circumciſion; and their practice with the practice of Abraham. Beſides, their principle is, that every believing parent or maſter of his family, is to his family as Abraham was to his. Hence my charge againſt them is, that to be conſiſtent with their principle, and to go through with their theory, they muſt baptize a converted South-Carolina planter and all his houſehold, whether he have 5, 50, 500, or 5000 ſlaves belonging to it. Upon the ſame principle, I might add, *to be conſiſtent with themſelves*, they would be, in this particular, downright papiſts, and baptize the ſubjects of a *mighty prince*, becauſe he was converted. If this principle be a goſpel one, it will bear examination, and not be the worſe for being practiſed to perfection. If it be abſurd when practiſed thoroughly, it is not the leſs ſo when practiſed ſmally. The only difference is, the abſurdity does not appear ſo glaring.

2. My other argument is, That all the evidence for infant baptiſm, to which the Pædobaptiſts can make any plauſible pretenſion, is founded upon the above abſurd principle. They can make no plea, that the families of the jailer, Stephanus and Lydia were baptized upon the faith of the parent or maſter, but upon the principle, that they were thus baptized, becauſe Abraham's family were circumciſed upon his faith. Now I argue thus, If it be according to the goſpel to baptize a ſmall family, or houſehold, on the faith of a believing parent or maſter, it is according to the ſame goſpel to baptize a larger one; and, if the principle be good, the larger the better, if there be any advantage in it, for then the more will be profited. Becauſe I thus argue, Mr. A. charges me with wiſhing to clog the Pædobaptiſt theory with this abſurdity in practice. I confeſs, I am not for halving matters, but for having good principles thoroughly practiſed, and the abſurdity of bad ones fully to appear.

I conſider myſelf as having turned *king's evidence.* I ſee my former errors, and renounce them; I condemn them, as having been practiſed by myſelf, and cannot juſtify them as practiſed by others.

If my arguments be juſt, Mr. A. confeſſes their practice is abſurd; or that it is abſurd to practiſe upon ſuch a theory. If the practice be abſurd, the theory is ſo too. If my arguments be not juſt, if they be not founded upon the very principle of their practice, they are invited to expoſe them, and to do it thoroughly. But if my arguments be correct, then they are invited to leave their abſurd practice, and come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty.

Upon the ſame page, whence he took the laſt quotation, Mr. A. tells me that he highly eſteems the goſpel ordinance of baptiſm; it is hoped that his future writings will bear a better teſtimony in his favour. On the ſame page, he alſo informs me, he has expoſed himſelf to great perſonal trials, to guard the ſacredneſs of that ordinance. Would it not be well for him to expoſe himſelf to a few more, that he might keep the ordinance according to the commandment and pattern given?

In page 48, he (through an error of judgment) charges me with condemning myſelf. His words are. "You have attempted to fix opprobrium upon the doctrine of Pædobaptiſm, by deriving it from the foul ſink of popery, and upon its abetters, as enliſted under the banners of Antichriſt. But you have condemned yourſelf with reſpect to the firſt, by conceding, that ſprinkling was practiſed in the caſe of clinicks before popery exiſted, and that infant baptiſm was in general practiſed in the days of St. Auſtin."

Here the good man's error is in his judgment. I have never conceded that ſprinkling, for goſpel baptiſm, was practiſed in the caſe of clinicks, or in any other caſe, before popery exiſted. The *myſtery of this iniquity* began to work even in the apoſtles' days, and popery had gotten conſiderable footing, when they ſubſtituted ſprinkling in the caſe of ſick perſons, for goſpel baptiſm. When St. Auſtin flouriſhed, popery was in its full tide of ſucceſsful experiment. It had now ſpread over nighly all what was called the Chriſtian world, ſave the Heretics, as the Pædobaptiſts called them, in the vallies of Piedmont. Theſe God preſerved from the mark of the Beaſt; and they never ſubmitted to the powers of Antichriſt. Theſe were the progenitors of the preſent Baptiſts; and by the Romaniſts,

they were ſtyled the oldeſt hereſy in the world. Hence, Mr. A. inſtead of ſhowing a contradiction of mine, has through error of judgment, added *one* to the number of his miſtakes. However foul the ſink of popery is, from that came Pædobaptiſm, and it is one of the main pillars of the man of ſin. Beſides, all who plead for it, plead for the principal ordinance and practice of Antichriſt. Chriſt hath no where commanded Pædobaptiſm; nor has he in any place commiſſioned his miniſters, either to preach or practiſe it. But the Pope hath done both.

In his 49th page, he appears to have ſome cloſing ſtrokes. "On the whole, ſays he, the controverſy between you and me is brought to an iſſue. It is this, *The foundation of your ſhadowy fabric was laid in aſſertion: The ſuperſtructure was reared in aſſertion: It has been attempted to be holden up by aſſertion; and it has at laſt vaniſhed as a mere ſhadowy thing.*" Even this aſſertion requires a little proof. By it Mr. A. expected to give the finiſhing ſtroke to the *taking away of my defenſive armor*. I frankly confeſs, it hath as much powerful efficacy towards removing it, as any paſſage, or even page which preceded it. I might, however, have excepted the two firſt lines of his title page; for there he tells us that it is done. Had he not given us the information, in the firſt outſet of his pamphlet, that Mr. Merrill's *defenſive armor* was taken from him, no perſon who underſtood the controverſy, would have gathered the idea from any thing which followed.

We will now turn our attention for a moment to his laſt Letter, in which he makes ſome obſervations upon my cloſing one to him. In this he does not appear in perfectly good humour. All his ſentences do not appear like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver. He ſays that the court, by which his errors were tried, is not in the Bible. This is alſo his miſtake; for all the texts in the Bible which ſpeak of a particular ſubject, is the Bible with reſpect to that ſubject. He alſo tells me that I entirely loſt ſight of the object which I ſhould have had in view, the ſupport of my own theory and practice. This is alſo his miſtake; for I kept in ſight the ſupport of my own theory and practice, and the deſtruction of his. He farther ſays, That the court, which was erected was not the one to which he appealed. This is a third miſtake; for it was the Bible with reſpect to his three great Antichriſtian errors; which are, ſprinkling for goſpel baptiſm, manifeſt unbelievers the ſubjects

of brptiſm, and communion with unbaptized perſons. By the Bible theſe three were tried and condemned. Had Mr. A. when he wrote his reply, poſſeſſed a ſolemn ſenſe of this truth, that by the Bible he, as well as I, muſt be judged at the laſt day, he would, probably, have omitted ſeveral of his epithets, and have endeavoured to prove, unleſs he were convinced of his errors, that though the court was a good one, yet he had not a fair hearing. Had he come forward, and have ſhown that any of the witneſſes were bribed, or rather that the ſenſe of their teſtimony was perverted, and requeſted a re-hearing, and obtained it, as he might have done, and then have brought forward ſome of the witneſſes again, and have ſhown, in open court, that they juſtified his principle and practice, and condemned mine, then he would juſtly have caſt the charges upon me; but to be out of humour, as I have ſeen ſome, after trial had, is not the beſt way to prove the innocency of his errors. Had he have conſidered my uſage towards him, not of the beſt kind, ſurely his wiſdom was to have proved his ſentence unjuſt. Then would he have righteouſly brought on me the two-fold crime of juſtifying the guilty, and condemning the innocent; yes, had he been able to have produced one text, which ſhould ſpeak for him, he would have been juſtified, according to a ſtatement which I made at the time, and before the court, in theſe words, 'Every text is allowed to be a good witneſs, and to poſſeſs evidence ſufficient to ſet the accuſed free, upon bearing teſtimony in his favour.' Had he have found one text to his purpoſe, he could have been acquitted before the public, before his own conſcience, and alſo before the Judge of all. But ſo long as he ſhall ſubſtitute hard words for hard argument, he may not be fully acquitted before either, and will convince but few that his cauſe is good.

However, I by no means fault him for bringing no text to his help; for I knew beforehand that he had none to bring. Otherwiſe I ſhould not have been ſo bold in condemning his errors, and in warning him to forſake them. His fault is in retaining them after they have been tried by the Bible and found *wanting*. I well knew, that a degree of ſeverity was uſed with his errors, but as truth would fully juſtify ſuch a uſe, it was conſidered that the obſtinacy of the caſe called for it. Error muſt be treated as being what it is, the enemy of God and man; and the groſs errors of Mr.

A. may call for ſeverer treatment ſtill; for they belong to the man of ſin, whom the Lord will condemn with the Spirit of his mouth, and will deſtroy with the brightneſs of his coming.

Did Mr. A. know the ſigns of the times, he would not have written with ſo much contempt as he has done. His courage, and that of his brethren too, in their wicked oppoſition againſt the Baptiſts will ſoon fail them. He doubtleſs recollects what a bloody decree was iſſued againſt the Jews, in the days of Haman, the ſon of Hamedatha, the Agagite, and ſigned in Ahaſuerus's name, and ſealed with the king's ſeal, to deſtroy, to kill, and cauſe to periſh, all Jews, throughout the hundred-twenty and ſeven provinces, from India to Ethiopia. Probably he has alſo recollection of the decree which was iſſued at Eſther's ſuit, by which the Jews had full liberty to ſtand for their lives, and to deſtroy, to ſlay and cauſe their enemies to periſh. This hath been written in the book of Eſther, for our learning. The Pope and his conclave, prompted by their rooted hatred towards the baptized church, have iſſued their decree againſt them to deſtroy, to kill and cauſe them to periſh. But a very different decree is now gone forth, of which Mr. A. hath either not heard, or yet diſbelieves. Indeed, it may be that the Baptiſts themſelves have not, generally, had the information, or dare not fully credit it, that they now have, according to the decree of the King, a perfect liberty to ſtand for their lives, and to deſtroy, to ſlay and cauſe to periſh, by the ſword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, not Mr. A.'s errors only, but alſo all the laws, traditions, ſtatutes and ordinances of antichriſt. The report of this decree may be to Mr. A. like as the ſecond decree of Ahaſuerus was to the enemies of the Jews, whilſt they diſbelieved it; but it will have a very different effect upon both him and his brethren, when the certainty ſhall be known, which they will ſoon know, and to their coſt too, except they ſpeedily repent of their hatred to the baptized church. It is this decree which emboldens me to ſtand for my life in the preſent controverſy; and fills me with expectation, that as it happened to the Jews, that they had rule over them that hated them, ſo it ſhall ſoon be that all who walk in all the ſtatutes and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs, ſhall be in honour, and all their adverſaries confounded. Let me not ſeem to Mr. A. or to the reader, like Lot to his ſons-in-law.

In his concluſion, he informs the reader that his public correſpondence with me is cloſed. It might have been as well for him, and more for the credit of his errors, to have taken Solomon's advice, and to have left off contention before he had meddled with it. But he adds, p. 53, "Should any other appear to advocate the doctrine, that immerſion is the excluſive mode of baptiſm, and eſſential to it, he will not be entitled to a public reply, unleſs he ſhall make uſe of ſome new topic of argument, or give old arguments a much more plauſible form than they have yet aſſumed. And he muſt be holden to the Scriptures as his ſource of evidence, becauſe there can be no eſſential doctrine, inſtitution, or duty, which the Scripture itſelf does not clearly aſcertain."

It is not difficult to aſſign the reaſon why Mr. A. requeſts his opponents to employ ſome new topic of argument; for their preſent topics, *plain ſcripture* precept and example, with their deductions, he finds very hard to be managed. Yet, to the confuſion of his whole ſcheme, he ſays, "There can be no eſſential doctrine, inſtitution, or duty, which the Scripture itſelf does not clearly aſcertain." Upon this declaration of Mr. A.'s the following queſtions are propoſed to the reader:

1. Do the Scriptures clearly aſcertain, that ſprinkling is the matter of goſpel baptiſm?

2. Does the Scripture clearly aſcertain, that infants and houſeholds of unbelieving adults are the ſubjects of goſpel baptiſm?

3. Does the Scripture clearly aſcertain, that unbaptized perſons are to be admitted to the communion?

The anſwer to each of theſe is thus, *that it does not.* Then the concluſion from Mr. A.'s premiſes is clearly this. That ſprinkling for baptiſm; that infants, or unbelieving houſeholds for the ſubjects of baptiſm; and that communion with the unbaptized, are not eſſential doctrines, inſtitutions, or duties. Hence, he is amuſing the public, and earneſtly contending for uneſſential matters. This concluſion is juſt, for it is indeed a truth, that his antiſcriptural notions are not eſſential, ſave to the ſupport of worldly inſtitutions, and to the cauſe of the man of ſin.

What we have more to offer, is a few concluſions from what we have paſſed over.

1. We conclude, that Mr. A. has a weak and bad cauſe to defend. For no good man, poſſeſſing talents and

education, could uſe ſuch falſe and beggarly arguments, make ſo many miſtakes, be guilty of ſuch miſrepreſentations, and fill his pages with notorious errors, in the defence of a good cauſe, or in the ſupport of truth.

2. We conclude, that Mr. A.'s whole performance, which we have examined, is one continued heterogeneous mixture of falſe arguments, weak arguments, miſtakes, miſrepreſentations, and errors; for we have attended to almoſt every page, and have found them to be of this deſcription.

3. We conclude, that his reaſons for quitting the field of public correſpondence with the Author, are but too obvious. We would ſuggeſt the idea, whether it would not be adviſable for him to change his ſide, or never enter the like field again.

4. We conclude, that Mr. A. who is no doubt a worthy character and a man of ſenſe, has been raiſed up by the Lord to expoſe the weakneſs of his antichriſtian cauſe; for he is a man of too refined an education to uſe ſo much ribaldry as too many of his denomination have done; at the ſame time, he is a man of too much honeſty, not to expoſe his real ſentiments; and finding no judicious arguments to ſupport what he really believed true, he has, with as much plauſibility as he could, made uſe of the beſt arguments which his bad ſide afforded. Theſe arguments, in their very nature, having no tendency to bring conviction to unprejudiced minds, will ſerve to open to public view the weakneſs and wickedneſs of that cauſe which ſo labours, and has need of ſuch management in its defence. Nothing is wanting, to the ruin of his cauſe and errors, in the judgment of the candid and impartial portion of the community, but to have them clearly expoſed. A few more ſuch publications as his laſt will accompliſh this buſineſs.

5. We conclude, that Mr. A. has no conſiſtent notion of that kingdom, called Chriſt's *viſible church*, which the God of heaven was to ſet up in the time of the four great monarchies, or during the days of thoſe kings ſpoken of by Daniel the prophet; for in parts of his pamphlet he appears to know not any difference between the *ſpiritual* kingdom of Chriſt in this world, which hath continued at leaſt ſince the converſion of Abel, and his *viſible* kingdom, which was ſet up during the Roman empire, and was at hand when the Baptiſt came preaching in the wilderneſs and baptizing in Jordan.

6. We conclude, that Mr. A.'s three great errors, which are ſprinkling or pouring for baptiſm, manifeſt unbelievers the ſubjects of baptiſm, and unbaptized church members and communion at the Lord's table with them, are all of a piece; for he has not found, nor can he find, one text of ſcripture to ſupport either of them. Beſides, each of theſe errors ſtrongly tends to deface and diſorganize the viſible church of Chriſt. They muſt therefore be parts of the man of ſin.

7. We conclude, that whilſt Mr. A. has been writing his Letters to the Author, he had not for his main object the knowledge and defence of the truth; for if he had, evidence would not have failed him in every particular, nor would he have made ſuch notorious miſtakes and blunders in every page. It is not truth, but error, which compels men to go ſuch a crooked courſe as he has travelled. Nor does truth require hard words to be employed in her defence; her *arguments* are ſufficiently trying for the erroneous to endure. Hard words are uſually the attendants on a bad cauſe; but truth is encompaſſed with hard and ſevere arguments. To oppoſe the truth is like kicking againſt ſharp pointed pins; the more reſolute the oppoſition, the more does the oppoſer injure himſelf. Would Mr. A. look into the diſturbances of his own boſom, he would find they are unlike what thoſe feel, who are calmly, yet earneſtly vindicating the ways of God to men.

8. We conclude, that a real Chriſtian muſt be greatly blinded by prejudice, to believe Mr. A.'s errors, when there is not one text in the Bible which ſpeaks a word in favour of either of them, and when, at the ſame time, every text which ſpeaks of the ſubject is directly againſt them, and explains and defends the oppoſite; as the reader may ſee by reading the Author's twelfth Letter to Mr. A.

Laſtly. We conclude, that as the baptized church have the open volume of revelation on their ſide, and the Captain of the Lord's hoſt for them, and as the time is now come in which they ſhould have liberty, full liberty, to ſtand for their lives, they ſhould now be ſtrong in the Lord and in the power of his might, putting on the whole armour of God, that they may be able to ſtand againſt the wiles of the devil; for they indeed have to wreſtle, not merely againſt fleſh and blood, but againſt principalities, againſt powers, againſt the rulers of the darkneſs of this world,

againſt ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places. At ſuch a time Heaven may well expect every Chriſtian to do his duty; then will the conflict be ſhort, and the Lord's battle glorioufly won. As Joab ſaid to his brother, (2 Sam. x. 12.) at the critical moment when an hard fought battle was juſt commencing, ſo I ſay to my baptized brethren, Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God; and the Lord do that which ſeemeth him good.

With deſires for Chriſt's riſing kingdom,
I am, the reader's and truth's friend,

DANIEL MERRILL.

SEDGWICK, AUGUST 11, 1806.

THE

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TWO DISCOURSES

N THE PERPETUITY AND PROVISION OF GOD'S GRACIOUS COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM AND HIS SEED.

Detecting,

BY PLAIN SCRIPTURE, STUBBORN FACTS, AND SOBER REASON,

E OF HIS GROSS MISREPRESENTATIONS, UNFOUNDED ASSERTIONS, AND SOPHISTICAL ARGUMENTS.

BY DANIEL MERRILL, A. M.
PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN SEDGWICK.

O my people! they which lead thee cauſe thee to err, and deſtroy the way of thy paths. *Iſaiah* iii. 12.

I am againſt them that propheſy falſe dreams, ſaith the Lord, and do tell them, and cauſe my people to err by their lies, and by their lightneſs. *Jeremiah* xxiii. 32.

Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. *Malachi* iii. 7.

BOSTON:
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1807.

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WILLIAM S. SHAW, *Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

TO ALL WHO FEAR GOD.

MEN AND BRETHREN,

YOUR attention has been often desired, and is still wished for. Truth is now working its way through darkness into light; it is making sure progress, like the rays of the morning; yet error, where it hath held its empire long, will give place to truth but through invincible necessity. The writer of the following Letters is not altogether ignorant of the influence of prejudice, and of strong prepossessions. He might well despair of success, in his present labours, were it not that truth is stronger than all things.

All such as fear God, have seasons in which their heart is warmed with love to God, to truth, and to duty. In such precious moments, truth will be permitted to speak. When it is thus with the godly, I wish for their attention to what I here present them.

Should you think that the author of the following pages has rebuked Mr. Worcester more sharply than Paul did Peter, then, I pray you, think again—Hath not Mr. Worcester done worse than dissembling Peter did?

I am not offended at Mr. Worcester's person, but I am offended at the liberties which he hath taken, against the word and church of the living GOD. *If I do not mistake, every candid Christian will be offended at the same things, before he shall have carefully perused all those false and delusory arguments, assertions, and insinuations, of Mr. Worcester's, by which he would keep in credit his Judaizing scheme,*

and retain the vail on many who begin to see. My prayer to the Father of Lights is, that he will speedily rend the vail from off the hearts of his own people. Truth, and not victory, is my object. Whether the reader be a friend to the writer, or the reverse, is not a matter of so much solicitude to me, as that the reader be a friend to himself; then will he seek for truth, and receive it, though it prove, for the present, painful, and destructive to his errors.

The fire of love and truth must burn up our errors, or we and they must be destroyed together.

Such as fear God, cannot be displeased with the request, that they will not be so swayed by prejudice and custom, as to believe Mr. Worcester without evidence, and disbelieve me, when the evidence is fully before them. If I have not fairly and fully proved his Sermons to be erroneous and unfounded, I ask not to be believed; but if I have, I ask this simple question—Why will you not believe me? If the truth be set in full view, can you disbelieve and yet be innocent?

Desiring that truth may prevail, to the speedy ruin of my own and the reader's errors,

I am his, with affection,

THE AUTHOR.

SEDGWICK, OCTOBER 27, 1806.

LETTERS, &c.

ADDRESSED TO THE PUBLIC.

We appeal to the Bible, to ſtubborn facts, and to common ſenſe.

LETTER I.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS,

GIVE audience, for truth will ſoon go forth as brightneſs, and ſalvation as a lamp which burneth. Many are now running to and fro, and knowledge is increaſing.

The oppoſition of Herod, and the diſputings of the Jewiſh doctors and prieſts, all united to direct the attention of men to the child Jeſus. In like manner, the oppoſition of the intereſted, and the diſputings of the Judaizing doctors and preachers in our day, will forcibly call the public attention to what is written of the church of Chriſt.

God, who turns the hearts of kings at his pleaſure, and directs the affairs of mortals, hath the means at command, and can effect every purpoſe.

Great events are taking place daily, and ſomething greater is expected. For more than twelve hundred and ſixty years, there hath been, in what is ſtyled the Chriſtian world, a church which is formed much after the model of the Jewiſh national church.

This church hath a Pope anſwering to the Jewiſh high prieſt, ſeventy cardinals for the ſeventy elders in Iſrael; a national antichriſtian church, anſwering to the national Jewiſh church. Infant baptiſm for Jewiſh infant circum-

ciſion. Baptiſm adminiſtered to thoſe who bring forth no fruits, as evidence of repentance, and to ſuch only, ſave in thoſe inſtances where heathens are converted; juſt as circumciſion was among the Jews, &c. &c.

This church is declared by her works, and by the united voice of Proteſtants, to be the man of ſin, the antichriſt, ſpoken of by Paul and the beloved diſciple John. However, many, if not moſt Proteſtants, whilſt they have renounced the power of antichriſt, have yet retained more or leſs of her abominations. Of theſe, the Rev. Samuel Worceſter appears to poſſeſs a full ſhare; for no one of all the individuals who would be thought a Proteſtant, appears more inclined to ſupport, with his full ſtrength, the broad yet ſandy foundation of popery.

Popery is little elſe, but Chriſtianity changed into Judaiſm, or pretended Chriſtianity Judaized. Judaiſm was once good, for once it was ſupported by the laws of Heaven. But now ſo far as it is practiſed, it is but will-worſhip, God no where commanding it.

The principal idea which runs through Mr. Worceſter's Two Sermons on Gal. iii. 29. is, *The viſible church formed in Abraham's family, and which for many generations was the Jewiſh, is now the goſpel church.*

What we ſhall, in the following pages, ſee, if the Lord give light and opportunity, is,

I. That the viſible church formed in Abraham's family, is not the goſpel church, but quite a different thing.

II. That Mr. Worceſter hath, to give his Judaizing ſcheme a ſemblance of truth and conſiſtency, dared to miſapply the word of God, add to it, and to take from it, and miſtate, or to miſrepreſent, almoſt every thing which came within his eager graſp.

It is diſagreeable to the writer, and it may be equally ſo to the reader, that a perſon of Mr. Worceſter's general reputation ſhould ſo commit himſelf before the public, as to make it an indiſpenſable duty to rebuke him before all, that others alſo may fear.

My purpoſe is, not to ſpare Mr. Worceſter at the expenſe of truth. At the ſame time, my wiſh is, not to expoſe him in a ſingle inſtance, where the cauſe of Chriſt does not demand it.

Before we attend particularly to what Mr. Worceſter has written, we will eſtabliſh the 1ſt. Propoſition; That the viſible church, formed in Abraham's family, is not the goſpel church, but quite a different thing.

This is evident, 1. From the conſideration, that the New Teſtament gives us no intimation, that any goſpel church was ever formed after that in Abraham's family.

One man of great faith, and hundreds without any faith, formed into a church in Abraham's houſe. There is nothing like this in all the goſpel. Not the leaſt hint, that a goſpel church was ever formed upon this principle.

2. The ſame thing is evident from what God tells us by Moſes, that when the Prophet, Jeſus Chriſt, ſhould come, all, who would not hear him, ſhould be cut off, (that is, excluded) from the church, or be deſtroyed from among the people, Deut. xviii. and Acts iii. Hence the church in Abraham's family, and the goſpel church, are quite different things. One compoſed of a great and good man, with his unbelieving houſehold; the other made up of believers, and of believers only.

3. From the following conſideration, it is manifeſt, that the viſible church in Abraham's family is not the goſpel church, but quite another thing. Iſai. liv. 13. lx. 21. ſpeaking of the goſpel church, tells us, That they ſhall be all taught of God, that they ſhall be all righteous. The meaning, no doubt, is, that Chriſt's viſible church ſhall all profeſs, and appear to be ſo. It was not thus in the church formed in Abraham's family.

The ſame thing is true from the conſideration, that the two churches were founded upon different covenants, one was in the *fleſh*, the other is in the *heart*, Gen. xvii. Jer. xxxi. If a viſible church was founded in Abraham's family, it was formed altogether upon the covenant of circumciſion. For, aſide from this covenant, there was no more appearance of a viſible church in his family, than there was in Lot's, or in Job's. If we call Abraham's circumciſed family a church, though it be no where ſo called from Geneſis to Revelation, it ſhould be carefully obſerved of what it was made up, of Abraham a good man, of a mocking Iſhmael, of an infant Iſaac, of all the men ſervants whom Abraham had bought with his money, and of all who were born in his houſe, from the oldeſt to the new-born infant.

It ought alſo to be well remembered, that not one of the ſeed of theſe ſervants, or infants, continued a member of the viſible church, ſave Jacob, the ſon of Iſaac. Hence it is manifeſt, that, notwithſtanding the covenant of circumciſion was in the fleſh of Abraham's family, yet the

privileges and *bleſſings* compriſed in the *promiſes* made to him, *were not*, by *divine right*, their inheritance.*

All which gave Abraham's family the leaſt appearance of a viſible church, in diſtinction from others, was their voluntary and involuntary ſubmiſſion to the covenant of circumciſion, without any faith, in the members, generally, as a neceſſary qualification.

What gives viſible appearance to the New Teſtament church, is her being baptized upon profeſſing to have received, what God ſays, Jere. xxxi. 33, 34, he will perform in her and for her; viz. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.—For they ſhall all know me from the leaſt of them to the greateſt of them, ſaith the Lord."

Theſe churches appear very different, the one from the other. Of the one, a thouſand may be members, becauſe they belong to a good man's family; of the other, no one can be a viſible member, but upon his being baptized upon a perſonal profeſſion of faith; for not otherwiſe can any one appear to be of the number with whom the Lord hath made the new covenant, and of *thoſe* who do *whatſoever* Chriſt commands them.

5. The Abrahamic church and the goſpel church are not the ſame; for what is ſaid of the latter, as to the quality of its members, was never applicable to the former.

Iſaiah, ſpeaking of the goſpel church, ſays, liv. 13, "All thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord." Chriſt mentions this paſſage, as deſcriptive of his followers, John v. 45 Peter, in his firſt epiſtle, chap. ii. ver. 9, ſpeaking to the goſpel church, and deſcribing her, ſays, "Ye are a choſen generation, a royal prieſthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." This was never true, in a goſpel ſenſe, of the Abrahamic, or Jewiſh church.

Beſides, what John ſaid, Luke iii. 9, of the peculiar quality of the trees, which ſhould compoſe, or be the conſtituent parts of the goſpel church, and what Paul ſays of the ſame church, Gal. iii. 26, are totally inconſiſtent with the idea, that the Jewiſh and goſpel churches are, as to the quality of the members of which they are compoſed, one and the ſame church. John ſays, "The axe is laid

* For the ſake of meeting the oppoſers upon their own ground, I ſhall term Abraham's circumciſed family of ſoldiers, ſervants, &c a church; reſerving liberty to ſhow, hereafter, ſhould truth ſo require, that it was not a church.

unto the root of the trees; every tree, therefore, which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down." Paul says to the Galatian church, "Ye are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus." As evidence of his assertion, he adds their profession, which they made at their baptism. For, says he, "as many of you, as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."

6. Christ's abolishing in his flesh the enmity (between Jews and Gentiles) even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, to make in himself of twain *one new man*, is inconsistent with the notion, that the gospel church is but the Abrahamic church in continuation. Eph. ii. 15.

In the next chapter, this matter is, if possible, still more strongly evinced. In this chapter Paul tells us, "That the *mystery* of Christ, in *other ages*, was not *made known* unto the *sons* of men, as it is *now* revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets, by the Spirit; that the *Gentiles should* be *fellow heirs*, and of the *same body*, and *partakers* of his *promise* in CHRIST, by the gospel." Paul further tells us, verse 9, "That the fellowship of the *mystery* from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God." But on supposition, that the gospel church is nothing else but the Abrahamic church enlightened and enlarged, where is the mystery? For, surely when the church was *first formed* in *Abraham's family*, a very large part of it was made up of Gentile unbelieving members, as churches formed upon the same model *now* are. Also where is the mystery, which hath been hid in God, from the beginning of the world, with relation to the gospel church, and the reception of the Gentiles into it, if the church hath, from Abraham's day, been what it now is, save she hath been favoured with new degrees of light, and more, or larger numbers of Gentiles have been added since Christ's incarnation, than were added before? If matters be thus, as the adversaries of the baptized church contend, what becomes of what Paul calls a newly revealed and long hidden mystery? But on supposition that the gospel church is a *new man*, or *body*, quite a different thing from what had ever been in the world before, established upon *better promises*, and founded upon a covenant very different from that of circumcision, even upon the *new covenant*, and combining all obedient believers, Gentiles equally as Jews, and excluding *every tree*, *whether Gentile or Jew*, which brought not forth good fruit, then here would be a mystery. This would be a thing never before.

revealed, or never generally underſtood before. A myſtery, which had been kept ſecret from the *foundation of the world*, which had been hidden in the boſom or purpoſes of God. This indeed appears to be the myſtery. Such a myſtery is this, that, upon its being true, it will ſpoil all the *theories* of the advocates for modelling the goſpel church according to the covenant of circumciſion. Either Paul miſtakes, when he tells us, that a great myſtery, with reſpect to the church, was revealed to him and to the holy apoſtles and prophets in his time, or Mr. Worceſter and his brethren miſtake, when they tell us, that all things have gone on, as they were in Abraham's time, and that the goſpel church is the ſame now, as the Jewiſh church was three thouſand years ago; and that there is no myſtery about the matter. The public will judge which is moſt worthy of credit, Mr. Worceſter and his brethren, or Paul and other apoſtles of the Lamb.

To aſcertain this point, and to make it evident, that I do not miſtake this myſtery, that the goſpel church is a *new man* or *body of men*, ſuch as the world never ſaw, till Jeſus appeared in fleſh, and to ſhow, that Mr. Worceſter and his brethren miſtake this matter wholly, we will add,

7. The goſpel church is not the viſible church formed in Abraham's family, but quite a different thing, as is evident from the circumſtances, which attended the ſetting up of the goſpel church.

1. It was compoſed of ſuch, and ſuch only, as manifeſtly, or profeſſedly, brought forth good fruit. Never was it thus with the church formed in Abraham's family.

2. It was compoſed of ſuch, and ſuch only, as were actually excommunicated from the Jewiſh church, or liable to be ſo, ſo far as Jews made any part of it. John ix. 22.

3. The goſpel church and the Jewiſh church were *both of them exiſting* at the *ſame time*, and *each oppoſed* to the *other*, for many years; nor have they *ever united to this day*. It is therefore an abſurdity to ſay, that they are *one* and the *ſame*, and that the *goſpel church* is but a *continuation* of the *Jewiſh*. With equal propriety might I ſay, after having erected a new houſe, whilſt the old one is ſtanding in full view, they are *both one*, the *new one* is but a *continuation of the old*. A perſon would be thought inſane to talk thus about things which now are; but men of learning and reputation may talk thus about things which have long ſince been, and be ſtill reputed wiſe.

A world of additional evidence might be produced to ſhow, that the church formed in Abraham's family is not the goſpel church, but quite a different thing. But I haſten to lay before the public the inconſiſtencies, abſurdities, and labyrinth of errors into which this notion hath led Mr. Worceſter; and in the mean time, remain,

The public's devoted ſervant,
For Chriſt's and the goſpel's ſake, &c.

We appeal to the Bible, to ſtubborn facts, and to common ſenſe.

LETTER II.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS,

IT is now goſpel times; in which Iſaiah tells us that the way of holineſs ſhall be plain, ſo that the wayfaring man, though a fool, unlearned, ſhould not err therein. It is, however, to be underſtood, that theſe wayfaring men poſſeſs humble hearts and willing minds, that they do as the Bereans did—ſearch the ſcriptures daily, that they may know the things which are true

The time is not far off, in which common Chriſtians will *read* for themſelves, *think* for themſelves, and *judge* for themſelves, that they may know and do the mind and will of God. They ought, all of them, to do thus now. The writer aſks no man to believe a word which he writes, any farther than the reader can diſcover that truth is in it.

It is well worthy of the reader's obſervation, that every writer, who underſtands his ſubject and has truth for his object, may be eaſily underſtood by the reader; but thoſe who will not come to the light, leſt their evil deeds ſhould be reproved, uſually confound themſelves and their readers too. Truth fears not the light; but error, like the glowworm, ſhines only in the dark.

To every one who underſtands the firſt principles of the preſent controverſy, the following is a ſelf-evident propoſition:—Either Mr. Worceſter and his brethren, or my brethren and myſelf, believe and practiſe in oppoſition to the word

of God; for God's word does not support both sides of a contradiction.

The Baptists, and those who in our land call themselves Pædobaptists, believe and practise, as to their distinguishing tenets, in direct opposition to each other. The Baptists believe that nothing is gospel baptism, but immersion in the name of the Father, &c. Those who call themselves Pædobaptists, believe that any and every application of water in the name of the Father, &c. is gospel baptism. As they both believe, so they both practise — The Baptists believe, that none but such as receive the word gladly, are qualified subjects for gospel baptism. Those who call themselves Pædobaptists, believe, that if all parents were wise and faithful, all persons would be baptized in infancy; and, of consequence, all ought to be baptized in unbelief, or before they can receive the word gladly.

Thus opposite are these two classes of men. Both cannot be right: both cannot, in these things, agree with the word of eternal truth. It cannot be true, that immersion of the whole body in water is essential to gospel baptism; and, at the same time, that any and every other application of water may be gospel baptism. Nor can it be true, that none are the qualified subjects of gospel baptism, but such as receive the word gladly; and yet, that all ought to be baptized, before they know one word from another.

Before we proceed to lay open Mr. Worcester's mistakes, inconsistencies, and absurdities, the author of these pages begs leave to notify his readers, that he hath not selected Mr. Worcester's performance, as the one to be particularly exposed, because it is materially different from what many others upon the same subject have written, but because he hath taken his ground decidedly, and hath laboured to support his cause more than most have done.

Mr. Worcester has, generally speaking, built his theory upon the principles, and supported it by the arguments, upon which his cause must stand or fall. It is hence obvious, that, provided his theory or sentiment cannot be supported by the principles and arguments which he hath brought forward, not his Sermons only, but all the books which his brethren have written in support of the same theory, must also fall with them.

It may be also noted, that my principal object is not to expose the antichristian theory and practice of Mr. Worcester and his brethren, but to set truth to public view. As truth is the best weapon by which to destroy error, hence

as truth is brought forward, his errors will be ruined. Should I on ſome particulars be prolix, the importance of the ſubject muſt be my apology to the public.

As Mr. Worceſter has, profeſſedly, built his Sermons, in oppoſition to the Baptiſts, on a part of Paul's epiſtle to the Galatians, it is expedient that we pay particular attention to this epiſtle.

This epiſtle was manifeſtly written againſt the very error which Mr. Worceſter would eſtabliſh by it. It is true, he has refined a little upon Judaiſm, and left out the more unpopular parts of that yoke of bondage; but he earneſtly retains that part which binds to the performance of the whole: "for," ſays Paul, "I teſtify to every man that is circumciſed, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." Mr. Worceſter aſſerts, that baptiſm hath taken the place of circumciſion, and means the ſame thing. The ſeal, he informs us, is changed, but the thing itſelf is *ſubſtantially* the ſame:* hence Mr. Worceſter holds *ſubſtantially* to circumciſion, and is therefore debtor to do the whole law. The *change* of a ſeal from *red* to *white* alters not the nature of an inſtrument, nor does it leſſen its obligation or binding force: hence, juſt ſo far as Mr. Worceſter is conſiſtent with his own theory, he is the very perſon, or his theory is what the Holy Ghoſt directed Paul to condemn, as being an antichriſtian error, among the Galatians.

That the reader may the more fully underſtand this matter, and to make it the more eaſy to expoſe and refute Mr. Worceſter's Judaizing principle, we ſhall here ſet down ſo much of the epiſtle to the Galatians as will bring the error of their antichriſtian teachers to view, and alſo Paul's argument againſt them.

Chap. i. ver. 1, 2. "Paul, an apoſtle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jeſus Chriſt, and God the Father, who raiſed him from the dead,) and all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia. Ver. 6, 7. I *marvel* that ye are *ſo ſoon removed* from *him that called you* into the grace of Chriſt unto *another goſpel:* which is not another; but there be ſome that *trouble you*, and would *pervert* the *goſpel* of *Chriſt*."

Chap. ii. ver. 3, 4, 5. "But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was *compelled to be circumciſed:* and that becauſe of *falſe brethren* unawares brought in, who came in *privily to ſpy out our liberty* which we have in Chriſt Jeſus,

* See his Sermons, page 55, 56, 57, &c.

that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place by subjection, *no, not for an hour*, that the *truth* of the *gospel* might *continue* with *you*. Ver. 11—14. But when Peter was come to Antioch, *I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed*. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the *circumcision*. And the *other Jews dissembled likewise with him*; insomuch that *Barnabas* also was carried away with their *dissimulation*. But when I saw that *they walked* not uprightly, according to the *truth* of the *gospel*, I said unto Peter before them all, If *thou, being a Jew*, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and *not* as do the *Jews*, why *compellest* thou the *Gentiles* to live as do the *Jews?* Ver. 16. Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be *justified* by the *faith of Christ*, and *not* by the *works* of the law: for by the *works of the law* shall no flesh be justified. Ver. 21. I do not *frustrate* the *grace* of God: for if *righteousness* come by the *law*, then *Christ is dead in vain*."

Chap. iii.—"O *foolish Galatians*, who hath *bewitched* you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the *works of the law*, or by the *hearing of faith?* Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the *flesh?* Have ye suffered so many things *in vain?* If it be yet in vain. He, therefore, that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the *works of the law*, or by the *hearing of faith?* Even as Abraham *believed God*, and it was accounted to him for *righteousness*. Know ye, therefore, that they *which are* of *faith*, the same are the *children* of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, *In thee shall all nations be blessed*. So then, they which be of *faith* are *blessed* with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The *just* shall live by faith. And the *law* is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us

from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the *blessing* of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might *receive* the *promise* of the *Spirit through faith*. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now, to *Abraham* and *his seed* were the promises made. He *saith not, And to seeds*, as of many; but as of *one*, And to thy *seed*, which is *Christ*. And this I say, that the *covenant* that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was *four hundred* and *thirty years* after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the *inheritance* be of the law, it is no more of *promise*: but God gave it to Abraham by *promise*. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the *seed* should *come*, to whom the *promise* was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one. Is the law then against the *promises* of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the *promise* by *faith* of *Jesus Christ might* be *given* to them that *believe*. But before faith came we were kept under the law, *shut up unto the faith* which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the *law* was our *schoolmaster* to bring us *unto Christ*, that we might be *justified* by *faith*. But after that *faith is come*, we are *no longer under a schoolmaster*. For *ye are* all the *children of God* by *faith in Christ Jesus*. For *as many* of you as have been *baptized into Christ* have *put on Christ*. There is neither *Jew* nor *Greek*, there is neither *bond* nor *free*, there is neither *male* nor *female*: for ye are all *one* in Christ Jesus. And if ye be *Christ's, then* are ye *Abraham's seed*, and *heirs* according to the *promise*."

Chap. iv ver. 9.—"But now, after that ye have *known God*, or *rather are known of God, how turn ye again to* the *weak* and *beggarly elements*, whereunto ye desire again to be in *bondage*? Ver. 16, 17. Am I, therefore, become your *enemy*, because I tell you the *truth*? They *zealously* affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. Ver. 21—26. Tell me, ye that desire to be *under* the *law*, do ye not *hear* the *law*? For it is written, that *Abraham* had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the

bond-woman was born after the *flesh;* but he of the *free woman* was by *promise.* Which things are an allegory: for these are the *two covenants;* the one from the *mount Sinai,* which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to *Jerusalem* which *now* is, and is in *bondage* with *her children.* But Jerusalem which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all Ver. 28—31. Now *we, brethren,* as *Isaac* was, are the *children* of *promise.* But as then, he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless, *what saith* the *scripture? Cast out* the *bond woman* and *her son:* for the *son* of the *bond-woman* shall not be *heir* with the *son* of the *free woman.* So then *brethren,* we are not children of the *bond-woman,* but of the *free.*"

Chap. v Ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not *entangled again* with the *yoke* of *bondage.* Behold, I Paul say unto you, That if ye be *circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing.* For I testify again to every man that is *circumcised,* that he is a *debtor* to do the *whole law.* Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. v. 6. For in Jesus Christ neither *circumcision availeth any thing,* nor *uncircumcision;* but *faith* which worketh by love. v. 9. A *little leaven* leaveneth the whole lump. v. 11. And I, brethren, if yet I *preach circumcison,* why do I yet suffer *persecution? then* is the *offence* of the cross *ceased.*"

Chap. vi. Ver. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. "*As many* as desire to make a *fair shew* in the flesh, they *constrain* you to be *circumcised;* only *lest they* should *suffer persecution* for the *cross of Christ.* For neither they themselves, who are *circumcised, keep the law;* but *desire to have you circumcised,* that they may glory in your flesh. But God forbid that *I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,* by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither *circumcision* availeth any thing, nor *uncircumcision,* but a new creature. And as many as walk according to *this rule, peace* be on *them,* and *mercy,* and upon the *Israel of God.*"

I have made this long quotation, that the reader may have, directly before him, all which Paul wrote in his epistle to the Galatians, relative to the subject which is now agitating the public mind. The last verse of the third chapter, Mr. Worcester took for his text, on which to build

his Judaizing theory. But neither in his text, nor in any other part of this epistle, is there a word in favour of his legal plan. But on the contrary, the whole of it was written, purposely to destroy such a principle, which began to work among Christians, even in the apostles' days.

In this epistle, Paul mentions two covenants, one contained in the following, and similar words; "In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." This covenant was confirmed of God in Christ to Abraham, four hundred and thirty years before the other, the Sinai covenant, was given; also this covenant of promise was made known to Abraham, more than *twenty* years before the *institution* of the covenant of circumcision, which was afterwards incorporated into the Sinai covenant. Neither of these covenants hath any thing to do with the covenant of circumcision, save the covenant of circumcision was a token of the former, and is included in the latter, and binds the subjects of it to perform all the legal duties which that enjoins. Hence the apostle scarcely gives so much as a hint, through the whole epistle, of the institution of the covenant of circumcision. Where he mentions the covenant itself, it is, to dissuade his brethren of Galatia from the practice of it, and to urge them to be wholly separate from it. Greatly the reverse is it with Mr. W. The covenant of circumcision is the theme of his discourse, and the basis on which his principle rests; from the beginning, to the end of his Sermons. At the same time, he fully manifests throughout that he has no correct idea of the covenant of circumcision; for he continually confounds the covenant of promise with the covenant of circumcision. Indeed, he must thus confound covenants, or his theory would have no plausibility.

But I hasten to unfold Mr. Worcester's confused and absurd ideas, that the public may be astonished at the blindness and confusion of many of their leaders.

The first confused and absurd idea of Mr. Worcester's, which I shall now mention, is contained in his exposition of his text. We will set down his text, and then his exposition.

His text is,* "And if *ye* be *Christ's*, *then* are ye Abraham's *seed*, and *heirs* according to the *promise*." His exposition follows, 'If ye be Christ's, then are ye brought

* Page 8.

into a covenant relation to Abraham, are justified in the *same manner* in which he was, and are entitled to ALL the *privileges* and *blessings* which were *contained* in the *promises* made to *him* and his seed.'

That the confusion and absurdity of this exposition may appear, nothing more is necessary than to mention some of the privileges and blessings which were contained in the promises to Abraham and his seed. Some of these privileges and blessings of Abraham's are, that in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed; that he should be a father of many nations; that kings should come out of him; that the land of Canaan should be their possession; and that Christ should be of them, as concerning the flesh, &c. &c.*

The reader can judge for himself, as to the consistency, or absurdity of Mr. Worcester's exposition. If every believer in Christ be entitled to *all* the *privileges* and *blessings* which were contained in the promises made to Abraham and his seed, then is he correct, otherwise absurd. If every believer be an Abraham, and if the *children* of every believer be the *children* of Abraham, &c. &c. then is Mr. Worcester's notion just, otherwise it is confused and inconsistent with common sense.

The next thing which I shall mention, is one of his false statements. It is in the next sentence but one, to the exposition of his text.

'It is,' says he, 'particularly to be *remarked*, that with a view to convince his Galatian brethren, of their unhappy error, in respect to justification, he ascends to the *memorable period* of the institution of the *church* in the *family* of Abraham, takes the covenant then made with Abraham and his seed, and traces it down in the transmission of its privileges and blessings to the Gentile church.'

This proposition is, indeed, as Mr. Worcester says, to be *particularly remarked*, for nothing is more false and delusory, than is what he here asserts. It is not only far from truth, but it is absurd.

It is far from truth: for Paul does not ascend to the *memorable period* of the *institution* of the *church* in the *family* of *Abraham*, but to the *period* in which God made to Abraham *this promise*, "In *thee* shall all nations be blessed." *This promise* Paul repeatedly brings to view, in the chapter in which is Mr. Worcester's text; and this promise was made

* Gen. xii. and xvii. Rom. ix. 5.

more than *twenty years* before the *inſtitution* of the *church* in *Abraham's family*. Beſides, that Mr. Worceſter might have no excuſe for miſtaking the matter, Paul expreſsly tell us, that the covenant, of which he is writing to the Galatians and to us, and by which he diſſuaded them, and by which he diſſuades us, from adhering to the covenant of circumciſion, was *four hundred and thirty years* before the law; whereas the *memorable period* in which a church was inſtituted in Abraham's family, was not *four hundred and ten years*. Let any who are able compare the dates.

Further, if a church were inſtituted in Abraham's family, it was by the covenant of circumciſion. For, previous to the giving of that covenant, there is no more appearance of a church in his family than in Job's or Lot's. To ſuppoſe that Paul referred the Galatians to this covenant, to reprove them for their error, in ſeeking juſtification by the law, is doubly abſurd; for their very error conſiſted in adhering to this covenant. Alſo, he told them, that, upon their being circumciſed, they were debtors to do the whole law.

The propoſition now under conſideration is not only falſe and abſurd, but deluſory. By it Mr. Worceſter would teach his own people and the public much as the Judaizing teachers taught the Galatians, that except they were circumciſed and kept the law of Moſes, they could not be ſaved. He does not uſe the ſame words with theſe deceivers, but the leading ideas through his Sermons appear to go upon the ſame principle; and in page 52, his words come ſo nigh, that probably the perverters of the Galatian church would not be offended at them. His words are, 'It is not, indeed, certain, that if you be unbelieving and diſobedient, your children will be finally loſt; for God may, as often in his ſovereign mercy he does, go *out of the limits of the church*, and beſtow his grace on thoſe who are aliens from the commonwealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers to the covenant of promiſe. But if, in this caſe, he does beſtow grace upon your children, it will not be in purſuance of any covenant engagement to you.'

This language harmonized but too well with thoſe *troublers* of the church, of whom Paul ſays, "*I would they were cut off.*"

Mr. Worceſter's propoſition next to that which we have been conſidering (page 8) is, 'The apoſtle's whole argument proceeds upon the plain ſcripture ground, that the covenant which was made with Abraham, and which con-

ſtituted the church in his family, was ſtill in force, and was never to be abrogated; that the Gentile churches were embraced in that covenant, as making one with the Jewiſh church; and that, by virtue of that covenant, believers of every age and nation were to be conſidered as the children of Abraham, *inheriting, by divine right*, ALL the *privileges* and *bleſſings* compriſed in the *promiſes* made to him and his ſeed.'

This propoſition contains another of Mr. Worceſter's falſe ſtatements, deluſory ſophiſms, and abſurd ideas. This propoſition is full of falſe ſtatements and erroneous aſſertions.

In the *firſt* place, he confounds the covenant which was confirmed of God in Chriſt, with the covenant of circumciſion, and gives his readers to underſtand that they are *both one:* whereas the Bible tells us that the latter is but the token of the former, Gen. xvii.

In the *next* place, he tells us, 'That the apoſtle's whole argument proceeds upon the plain ſcripture ground, that the covenant which was made with Abraham, and which *conſtituted the church* in his family, was ſtill in force, and was never to be abrogated.'

The apoſtle, inſtead of going, as Mr. Worceſter ſays, upon the ſcripture ground, that the covenant which was made with Abraham, and which conſtituted the church in his family, was ſtill in force, and never to be abrogated, does not, in the whole chapter, ſo much as once mention that covenant by which a viſible church was conſtituted in Abraham's family, unleſs it be to reprove the *fooliſh* Galatians, who were giving heed to Judaizing teachers, who were preaching among them this covenant of circumciſion.

Paul goes, indeed, upon the plain ſcripture ground, and upon this plain ſcripture ground too, that the goſpel church was and is built upon the promiſe made to Abraham long before the covenant of circumciſion was ever mentioned,* and upon the covenant which was confirmed of God in Chriſt four hundred and thirty years before the law, and more than twenty before there was any viſible church formed in Abraham's family, or the covenant given upon which it was conſtituted. What Mr. Worceſter here mentions of the covenant and conſtitution of a church in Abraham's family, is manifeſtly a mere deluſory ſophiſm or deception; for the apoſtle does not ſo much as once intimate any ſuch thing.

* See Gal. iii. 8, 17. and Gen. xii. 3.

3. In the propoſition now under conſideration, Mr. Worceſter tells us, that the Gentile churches were embraced in that covenant, as making one with the Jewiſh church. Here he comes out, and ſhows himſelf to be one of the Judaizing teachers: but the apoſtle ſays not a word of any ſuch thing.

4. Says Mr. Worceſter, 'And by virtue of that covenant, believers of every age and nation were to be conſidered as the children of Abraham.'——*Reply.* The apoſtle no where ſays, that ever any one believer, of any age or nation, was to be conſidered as a child of Abraham by *virtue* of *that* covenant by which a church was conſtituted in his family. The apoſtle ſays, "If *ye* be *Chriſt's*, then are ye Abraham's ſeed;" *not*, if ye be circumciſed, or be in the covenant of circumciſion.

The abſurdity of the idea, in the cloſe of the propoſition, 'of believers *inheriting*, by *divine right*, *all the privileges and bleſſings* compriſed in the promiſe, made to Abraham and his ſeed," has been already expoſed.

Thus falſe, deluſory, and abſurd is Mr. Worceſter's main propoſition, which leads to and introduces his no leſs falſe, deluſory, and abſurd doctrine.

It may be pleaſing and profitable to the reader, to have here ſtated a few general truths, which relate to the matter in hand, and may ſerve to explain it.

1. It was by virtue of the *covenant* of grace and promiſe, which was revealed, and which was confirmed of God in Chriſt, that Abraham was made a faithful ſaint.

2. It was by virtue of the covenant of circumciſion, or by Abraham's compliance with it, that he and his family were conſtituted a viſible church.

3. It is by virtue of the ſame covenant of grace and promiſe, by which Abraham was made a ſaint, that the nations of the earth are bleſſed in or by him, and many are made believers in Chriſt.

4. It is by virtue of obedience to the ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt, and eſpecially to the firſt, viz. *baptiſm*, that believers are conſtituted into viſible goſpel churches.

The reader underſtanding the above plain truths, we will now proceed to conſider the *doctrine*, which Mr. Worceſter would have us believe to be contained in his text.

'The text, then, (ſays he) thus contemplated, in its connexion, preſents for our conſideration this great and intereſting *doctrine*, viz. *In God's covenant of promiſe with Abraham*

provision was made for the continuance of the church formed by it; and thus for the transmission of the privileges and blessings contained in it, from generation to generation, down to the close of time.'

That the public may at once see that there is no connexion between Mr. Worcester's text and the *doctrine* which he says it presents, I will here set down the text, and the three verses next preceding.

Ver. 26. "For ye are all the *children* of God by *faith in Jesus Christ.*" Ver. 27. "For as many of you as have been *baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*" Ver. 28. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Ver. 29. "And if *ye* be *Christ's, then* are *ye Abraham's seed,* and *heirs according to the promise.*"

In verse 26, Paul tells the Galatian Christians, that they were all the children of God by *faith in Christ Jesus; not* by *circumcision,* or by the *works* of the *law.* In verse 27, he gives the reason; "For (says he) as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have *put on Christ.*" This infants could not do. In verse 28, he informs us, that in the gospel church both Jew and Greek, both bond and free, both male and female, are all one in Christ Jesus. In the last verse, Paul says, "And if *ye be Christ's, then* are ye *Abraham's seed,* and *heirs according to the promise.*" According to the *promise* of *circumcision*? Yes, if Mr. Worcester's notions are correct. But where does he find such a promise? in his text? or in the chapter which contains his text? or in the epistle which contains the chapter? or in any other inspired epistle? No where; and the public ought to know it. The public ought to be apprised of this: and every one who understands the matter, ought to inform his brother, that neither Paul, nor any other inspired penman, hath ever told us, that the visible church in Abraham's family was formed by the covenant which Paul mentions repeatedly in the third chapter of his epistle to the Galatians. Paul, by mentioning in verse 8, the covenant of which he was speaking, and by fixing in verse 17, the date of it, or the time of its being manifested or confirmed to Abraham, explicitly, or with great plainness, tells us that he meant no such thing.

A few consequences will now be stated.

1. Mr. Worcester appears to have misunderstood his text wholly, not a single idea being found in it as he supposed.

2. Mr. Worcester appears to have wholly misunderstood the covenant of which Paul speaks, in the chapter whence he took his text; this covenant being completely distinct from the covenant which gave visibility to the church in Abraham's family.

3. Mr. Worcester is manifestly *far from knowing*, that the thing, and the only thing, which constituted Abraham's family into a visible church, was his circumcising, at God's command, all the males in his house. Had Mr. Worcester have known this, he would have dismissed his Sermons before he delivered them, and not so darkened counsel by words without knowledge.

4. It is manifest, that Mr. Worcester is full in sentiment with those who troubled the Galatian churches; and that he hath perverted his text and the intention of the apostle, that he might defend the very heresy which Paul laboured to destroy. For all which those Judaizing teachers endeavoured, was to bring the gospel church to the standard of the Jewish; and what Mr. Worcester endeavours is, for substance, the same thing.*

The public, and every reader, is desired to hear me patiently; for, if the Lord will, I have many things yet to say, that I may, through the grace of the Lord Jesus, deliver many from the Judaizing tenets of Mr. Worcester and his brethren.

In the mean time, may Jesus possess my heart, and the public my best wishes and zealous labour for their good.

I am, &c.

We appeal to the Bible, to stubborn facts, and to common sense.

LETTER III.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS,

IN my last I set before you Mr. Worcester's text, doctrine, and several things connected with them; and mentioned the covenant of which Paul spake, and

* See page 8, 9, and every other page in his Sermons.

shewed how Mr. Worcester mistook the whole matter. In this you may expect to find the manner in which he handles his subject, and some of his arguments, exposed.

His general method of discourse was,

'I. To show that the covenant which was made with Abraham, and by which the church was formed in his family, was intended to be perpetual, or to continue throughout all generations; and,

'II. To show more particularly what provision was made in that covenant for the continuance of the church formed by it, and for the transmission of the blessings contained in it.'

His next words are, 'It cannot be necessary, in a laboured manner, to prove, that by the *covenant* made with Abraham, a church was formed in his family.' Here he takes for granted, or as not necessary to be in a laboured manner proved, the *very subject* which, of all others, it became him to prove thoroughly, if he could. Had he but proved, or will he now prove, that the confirmation of that covenant, of which Paul speaks, Gal. iii. 8, 17, or that the being *actually interested* in that covenant was what constituted Abraham and his family a visible church, then would we grant him all he asks. But stubborn facts will forever keep it beyond his power to prove any such thing. For, as has been before observed, the promise that all the families of the earth should be blessed in Abraham, and this covenant also was confirmed, and yet there was no visible church in his family for more than *twenty* years after: nor was it constituted till the covenant of circumcision was given, and in full practice. These are stubborn facts, which Mr. Worcester cannot remove, till he blot out the page of revelation.—Thus the first principle, and the whole foundation, on which he built his discourses, and his opposition against the gospel church, being removed, we might leave the superstructure to fall of itself, were it not that he has many disingenuous remarks and unfounded assertions scattered through the whole of it.

Mr. Worcester has done as is usual for the ingeniously erroneous to do; in the first place, *take for granted* the *first principles* which were necessary to be proved, yet incapable of proof, and then proceed with considerable plausibility.

Says he, (page 10) 'Several arguments in support of the proposition, that the covenant made with Abraham and his seed, and consequently the church formed by it, did not cease on the introduction of the gospel dispensation,

but were intended to continue throughout all generations, I will now, my brethren, submit to your consideration.

It is sufficient just to remark, that the *covenant* which gave visible existence to the church in Abraham's family did cease, and was never intended to continue in the visible church of God, but till the *seed* should come to whom the promise was made. Paul is my first witness, Gal. v. 3. "If ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing." Paul is my second witness, 1 Cor. vii. 18. "Is any called in uncircumcision? *let him not become circumcised.*" This *covenant* of circumcision was the only covenant which gave visibility to a church in Abraham's family. Paul told all believing Gentiles, and all Jews, who were not circumcised, that they ought not to keep this covenant. It ought, therefore, to have ceased; and it did generally, save where Paul's opposers kept it alive. My third witness is, the apostles, elders, and the whole church at Jerusalem, who sent to the Gentiles, *that they need not observe the covenant of circumcision.* See Acts xv.

Mr. Worcester's arguments are now to be considered.

His *first* is, 'By the covenant made with Abraham, he was constituted the father of all them that believe.'

Answer. No person, who understands the controversy between those who hold to the gospel dispensation, and those who plead for the continuance of the Jewish, will deny the truth of the proposition, which contains Mr. Worcester's first argument; but every person who has any considerable knowledge of the subject, will deny that the argument hath any connexion with the thing to be proved by it. Let Mr. Worcester only prove, that Abraham was, by the covenant of circumcision, constituted the father of all them that believe, and we will grant his argument to possess weight; but till he does, his argument is deservedly considered without force.

But, says he, page 12, 'If we be members of a different church, formed by a different covenant from that of Abraham, what relation have we to Abraham? in what respect are we his children? how is it that we are blessed with him?'

Answer. Not by being in a visible church state, either Jewish or Christian; but by being the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, Gal. iii. 25, 29, and according to the promise, Gen. xii. 3. xxii. 18. Besides, Abraham possessed faith, and received the promises, not whilst in a church state; not *in circumcision*, but *in uncircumcision*. Just so, if

ever we be bleſſed with faithful Abraham, it ſhould be, not while we be in a church ſtate, but before we be baptized; then we may receive baptiſm as Abraham did circumciſion, as a ſeal of the righteouſneſs or ſincerity of our faith. Nor did Abraham, as Mr. Worceſter (page 12) would have us believe, receive the promiſes, while being the covenant father of a viſible church; for when he received the promiſes there was no viſible church.

His *ſecond* argument is, 'God's *covenant* of *promiſe* with Abraham compriſed all the bleſſings and privileges ever promiſed to believers and to the church.'

Suppoſe we grant all this too, what hath it to do with the buſineſs on hand? how does it ſhow that the goſpel church is but the Jewiſh church in continuation? for the covenant of promiſe was confirmed of God in Chriſt, and made manifeſt to Abraham, before the Jewiſh church exiſted; and the bleſſings and privileges promiſed to believers, may be enjoyed by the goſpel church after the Jewiſh is aboliſhed.

Says Mr. Worceſter, page 14, 'I will eſtabliſh my covenant between me and thee, and thy ſeed after thee, ſays the Lord to Abraham, for an everlaſting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee; and in thee, and in thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed.' All this is true; but what, in particular, hath this to do with the conſtituting of Abraham's family into a viſible church? Mr. Worceſter ſubjoins, 'Theſe promiſes, my brethren, are of vaſt comprehenſion.' Certainly they are. They, by implication, comprehend all the bleſſings and privileges which have been enjoyed by the Jewiſh church; and all which have been, or ſhall be, by the goſpel church. Yet there is not ſo much as the leaſt hint, in any one of them, that they comprehend what he brought them to prove—that the Jewiſh and goſpel churches are one and the ſame church.

Again, ſays he, on the ſame page, 'To Abraham and his ſeed, ſays the apoſtle, were the promiſes made. To Abraham and his ſeed, comprehending Meſſiah, and all true believers as included in him, were made the promiſes, which compriſe all the bleſſings ever to be conferred upon the church and people of God.' If we grant all this, ſtill it hath nothing to do with the point in queſtion, ſave it be in his application of it, to deceive the credulous, and augment the darkneſs of the blind.

Mr. Worceſter adds, 'Was this covenant then, ſo vaſtly comprehenſive with reſpect to its bleſſings, ever to be abrogated?' We reply, Surely not.

He aſks again, 'Was the church which was formed by it, and ſo richly endued, ever to be aboliſhed?' Our anſwer is, Firſt, the viſible church in Abraham's family was never formed by this covenant; and ſecondly, that the Abrahamic church was never ſo richly endued, nor was ever any other church, as Mr. Worceſter ſuppoſes. The promiſes were not made to Abraham and the church, Jewiſh or Chriſtian, but to him and *his ſeed*, which is Chriſt.

He again aſks, 'Was there to be another covenant, comprehending more and greater bleſſings, another church, more largely and richly endued?' Our reply is, No, no.

But I am tired of ſuch queſtions, which are wholly from the point. Mr. Worceſter appears to have forgotten his ſubject, or to have no argument which is applicable. Should he tell us that the Engliſh are white, and therefore the Africans are of the ſame complexion, his poſition and argument would be of equal aptitude and force with what he hath as yet ſaid.

His note, pages 17, 18, ſhould have a moment's attention, for by it, it is manifeſt that he is wholly unacquainted with the ſentiments of his opponents, as to the covenant of promiſe, mentioned Gen. xii. 3. xxii. 18. Gal. v. 8, 17. and in many other places. 'As nothing (ſays he) could be more unfounded, ſo nothing could be more derogative of the honour of the God of Abraham, than the ſentiment, that the covenant made with Abraham and his ſeed was only a temporal covenant, and included only temporal bleſſings.' Had he been but ſmally informed as to the Baptiſt ſentiment, with relation to the above mentioned covenant of promiſe, he could never have honeſtly ſuggeſted, that they hold the ſentiment which he in his note implicitly charges to their account.

Mr. Worceſter's *third* argument is now to be conſidered, and it is in theſe words—'The covenant made with Abraham and his ſeed, is the covenant of which, in the New Teſtament, Chriſt is ſaid to be the Mediator, and which is deſignated as the covenant to be eſtabliſhed with the church in the days of the goſpel. For this is the covenant that I will make with the houſe of Iſrael, After thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.' Very well; but this is not the cove-

nant of circumciſion, by which the Jewiſh church was conſtituted, or by which Abraham's family was formed into a viſible church. This is the new and better covenant, which hath better promiſes than had the covenant of circumciſion. We ſtill ſee that Mr. Worceſter's argument makes nothing to his purpoſe.

Page 19, he tells us, 'The Sinai covenant, the Moſaic law of commandments contained in ordinances, as it was added but for temporary purpoſes, has waxed old, and is vaniſhed away.' Then the covenant of circumciſion is gone with it: for, ſays Paul, "I teſtify to every man that is circumciſed, that he is a *debtor to do the whole law*," Gal. v. 3.

What Mr. Worceſter aſſerts in pages 19 and 20, ought to arreſt the attention of the public; for in theſe pages he hath, to carry his Judaizing ſcheme, directly contradicted the word of the Lord by both Jeremiah and Paul. His words are, 'As the Lord ſaid to Abraham, *I will eſtabliſh my covenant between me and thee, and thy ſeed after thee,*—to *be a God unto thee*, and *to thy ſeed after thee; ſo* he ſaid to Iſrael *in* EGYPT, *I will take you* to *me* for *a people*, and *I will be to you a God;* and *ſo* he ſaid concerning the *houſe of Iſrael* and the *houſe of Judah* in the *days of the goſpel*, I will put my law in their *inward parts*, and *write it in their hearts;* and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people. The *covenant*, or the *great* and *leading promiſe* of the *covenant*, as expreſſed in theſe *ſeveral inſtances, is the ſame.—On the ſlighteſt inſpection, it is plain that the* COVENANT, *mentioned in the ſeveral inſtances now* before us, is ONE and the SAME;—and in each of the inſtances, the *great promiſe* is, To be a *God to the church*, and *to the* SEED *of the church.*'

Here Mr. Worceſter hath dared to contradict the word of the Lord in direct terms; and to this he hath been compelled, that he might ſupport his Judaizing ſcheme, his antichriſtian error.

The word of the Lord is, Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, 33, "Behold, the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will make a *new covenant* with the *houſe of Iſrael* and with the *houſe of Judah; NOT according* to the *covenant* that I made with *their fathers*, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of *Egypt;* (which my covenant they brake, although I was an huſband unto them, ſaith the Lord;) but *this ſhall be the covenant* that I will *make* with the *houſe of Iſrael, After* thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will *put* my *law* in *their inward parts*, and *write* it *in their hearts;* and will be their God, and they ſhall be my people." Here

Mr. Worceſter aſſerts, that God's covenant with the houſe of Iſrael in *Egypt*, and in the *days* of the *goſpel*, are ONE and *the* SAME. God ſaith, that the *one* is *not* according to the *other*.

The word of the Lord by Paul, Heb. viii. 8, 9, 10. is, "Behold, the days come (ſaith the Lord) when I will make a *new covenant* with the houſe of Iſrael, and with the houſe of Judah: NOT *according* to the *covenant* that I made *with their fathers*, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of *Egypt*, &c.

How long ſhall the religious world be deceived, by men who make a buſineſs of wreſting, perverting, and contradicting the word of the Lord!

Mr. Worceſter not only wreſts, perverts, and contradicts the ſcriptures, but he alſo adds to them, as we ſhall have repeated occaſion to ſhow. One inſtance we have in the words juſt quoted from page 20; 'And (ſays he) in each of the inſtances, the great promiſe is, *To be a God to the church, and to the ſeed of the church.*'—'*To be a God to the ſeed of the church.*' *This is clear addition*, for which he hath reaſon to expect God will reprove him. For in this inſtance he not only adds to God's word, but manifeſtly contradicts it. For, ſays Paul, Gal. iii. 16. "To Abraham and *his ſeed* were the promiſes made. He ſaith not, And to *ſeeds*, as of *many*; but as of *one*, And to thy *ſeed*, which is Chriſt." Beſides, if the great promiſe is to the ſeed of the church, what then became of *this promiſe*, as to the *ſeed of the church*, in *Abraham's family?* Out of perhaps a thouſand members, only the ſeed of Iſaac manifeſtly bleſſed, and but one of his, even Jacob. Into what abſurdities does Mr. Worceſter's theory drive him!

Page 23, ſays he, 'So plain from the ſcriptures it is, that the covenant made with Abraham is continued under the goſpel, and therefore that the church formed by it is alſo ſtill continued.' As Mr. Worceſter ſat out with confuſed ideas, or without any idea, of that covenant by which a viſible church was conſtituted in Abraham's family, ſo he proceeds on in darkneſs. His argument in plain Engliſh is this—The covenant which God made with Abraham, to be a God to him and to his ſeed, is continued under the goſpel; therefore the church formed by the covenant of circumciſion is ſtill continued. Here his antecedent and conſequent have no connexion: the one is *true*, the other *falſe*.

Mr. Worcester's note, page 23, is not pleasing, for it is not true. The principal idea in it is, 'From this source (the *unscriptural blending* of the Abrahamic and Sinai covenants together) sprang the error of the legal Jews, in former ages; and from this same source has sprung the error of the *deniers* of the *Abrahamic covenant* and church, or the Antipædobaptists, in modern times.'

Answer. A more unjust statement, or a more illiberal suggestion, I presume was never made by the man of sin. But before we shall have done with Mr. Worcester, we shall find he has many similar ones. As to the legal Jews, we will pass them; but as to the Antipædobaptists, we ask, Do they, in modern times, or did they ever at any time, deny the Abrahamic covenant? Our answer is, No: nor is Mr. Worcester able to mention a time in which they denied it. They deny his perverted use of it. They deny that the covenant which was manifested to Abraham in Ur, or Haran, and which was confirmed of God in Christ four hundred and thirty years before the law, was that covenant by which a visible church was formed in Abraham's family. But they have never denied, nor have they the least inclination to deny, that covenant, which promised to Abraham, that in him and in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed: nay, they believe in this covenant, and hope to share in the blessings contained in it.

How long shall those who lead God's people, cause them to err from the right ways of the Lord!

I am, &c.

We appeal to the Bible, to stubborn facts, and to common sense.

LETTER IV.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS,

YOU will, no doubt, join with me in sentiment, that Mr. Worcester's arguments ought to be critically examined; and that when a ruler in Israel comes forward, with set purpose to impose his errors on the public, his

arguments ſhould be fully inveſtigated and thoroughly refuted. I muſt, therefore, call your attention to his next argument, which is,—

Fourth. 'The church under the goſpel is uniformly in the ſcriptures repreſented as being the ſame church, or a continuation of the ſame church, which was formed in the family of Abraham.'

The propoſitions on which he formed his preceding arguments we have cheerfully granted to be true, and ſhowed that they have no relation with his ſubject, which he would eſtabliſh by them; but this argument, or the propoſition on which it is built, has no truth in it. The ſcriptures give no ſuch repreſentation, as Mr. Worceſter here tells us that they uniformly do; at leaſt, I find no ſuch place. I find no place where the ſcriptures give ſo much as a diſtant hint that the church under the goſpel is but a continuation of the Jewiſh church. The ſcriptures explicitly teſtify juſt the contrary from what Mr. Worceſter aſſerts.—But we will hear him illuſtrate and enforce his argument a little.

Says he, page 24, 'It would be very remarkable indeed, if this was not the caſe. It would be very remarkable indeed, if, in the ſcriptures, Abraham and his ſeed were repreſented as making two or more diſtinct and quite different families; or if the children of Abraham under the goſpel, who are only heirs according to the promiſe made to him, were repreſented as compoſing a church, entirely diſtinct and different from that which was founded in the family of their father: but ſuch a repreſentation is, in the ſcriptures, no where to be found.'

Thus Mr. Worceſter comes out in full, that the goſpel church is but a continuation of the church formed in Abraham's family. We might have left him to poſſeſs his opinion in quietneſs, had he not have attempted to perſuade the public that the ſcriptures ſay the ſame thing; but as the matter is, we wiſh the public, and Mr. Worceſter alſo, to hear a few words, which the ſcriptures ſay on this ſubject.

Paul, ſpeaking of the Jews and Gentiles, and of the church as made up of both, ſays, Eph. ii. 14, 15. "For he (that is, Chriſt) is our peace, who hath made *both one*, and hath *broken down* the *middle wall* of *partition* between us; having *abbliſhed* in his fleſh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to *make in himſelf* of *twain* ONE NEW MAN." Here, if I underſtand the apoſtle correctly, and the public will judge, Paul directly

contradicts what Mr. Worceſter affirms the ſcriptures uniformly repreſent. Mr. Worceſter ſays the goſpel church is the *old one* continued, the apoſtle ſays it is a *new one:* the public will judge whether Mr. Worceſter or Paul is to be credited.

Daniel, ch. ii. 44. whilſt interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream, ſpeaking of the goſpel church or kingdom, ſays, "And in the *days of theſe kings* ſhall *the God of heaven ſet up a kingdom*, which ſhall never be deſtroyed: and the kingdom ſhall not be left to other people, but it ſhall break in pieces and conſume all theſe kingdoms, and it ſhall ſtand forever." Here the prophet Daniel ſays, "*The God of heaven ſhall ſet up a kingdom*," within a certain limited period, between the exiſtence of the Babyloniſh kingdom and the deſtruction of the Roman. Mr. Worceſter ſays, the God of heaven ſhall continue, enlighten, and enlarge the *old Jewiſh kingdom*, or *church*. The public will believe whom they pleaſe, Mr. Worceſter, or the prophet Daniel.

Jeſus Chriſt ſaid to the Jews, Matt. iv. 17. "Repent: for the *kingdom of heaven* (the *goſpel church*) is at hand." Mr. Worceſter ſays, The *old Jewiſh* church, or kingdom, was about to be revived.

Again, ſays the Lord, John iii. 3. "Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God:" that is, none but ſuch as are born again, are qualified ſubjects for the kingdom of God, or can be intereſted in its bleſſings. Mr. Worceſter, if I do not miſtake him, ſays, If the good man of the houſe believe, all who are in his houſe may ſee the kingdom of God, or do '*by divine right inherit all the bleſſings and privileges of the goſpel church, this kingdom of God.*' The public will ſtill judge whom to believe.

The ſcriptures ſay, that the converted Jews were, in the apoſtles' days, added to the goſpel church (Acts iii.) Mr. Worceſter ſays, the Jewiſh and goſpel churches are *one*; and of conſequence, the converted Jews could not be added to the goſpel church, for they belonged to it from their childhood or infancy.

The apoſtle to the Hebrews, ch. xiii. 10. ſays, "We have an *altar*, whereof *they* have no right to eat *who* ſerve the *tabernacle:*" that is, thoſe who abide with the *Jewiſh church*, have no *right* to *goſpel ordinances*. Mr. Worceſter ſays, the Chriſtian *altar* and the Jewiſh *tabernacle* are ſubſtantially the ſame, or the Jewiſh and goſpel churches are both *one*; and therefore, ſuch as ſerve the *one*, have a right to eat of the *other*.

This is but a ſmall ſample of Mr. Worceſter's diſagreement with the ſcriptures: we ſhall ſee more ſoon.

In pages 24, 25, Mr. Worceſter gives us a large quotation from the ſixtieth chapter of Iſaiah. He brought it forward to prove that the Jewiſh and goſpel churches are one and the ſame. He tells us, 'that the whole chapter is in point, but a part may ſuffice as a ſpecimen.' Had he given us the whole, every reader might have ſeen that *every part* was out of point, as to what he would prove by it. The 21ſt verſe informs Mr. Worceſter, that this chapter knows nothing of this Judaizing ſcheme. The prophet addreſſes this chapter to the goſpel church; and in verſe 21, ſays to her, 'Thy people alſo ſhall be *all righteous.*" This was never true of the Jewiſh church, nor of any church formed after the model of the Jewiſh. This promiſe was never made concerning the Jewiſh national church; but to Zion, the people of God, for the comfort of the pious few, who were waiting for the *conſolation* of the ſpiritual Iſraelites. This promiſe does not belong to any church, nor was it ever fulfilled to any, ſave to the goſpel church, to the church formed according to the commandment and pattern given—of *none* but *believers.* Thus, had Mr. Worceſter quoted the whole chapter, it would not only have been totally from his purpoſe, but it might have been ſeen by all his readers, that the promiſes in it did not apply to the old Jewiſh church, nor to the modern Jewiſh churches, like his own, and all others which are compoſed of believing parents and their unrighteous children; but to the *church*, whoſe members are baptized upon a profeſſion of faith, or upon their being manifeſtly all righteous.

Mr. Worceſter's other remarks and ſcripture paſſages, under this argument, appear equally applicable with the above; not one of them having any relation to the ſubject which he wiſhes to prove. When a man ſets off in a wrong direction, he gains nothing by continuing his courſe.

Mr. Worceſter's *fifth* argumentative propoſition is,—'The covenant made with Abraham is expreſsly declared to be an everlaſting or perpetual covenant; a covenant to continue to the lateſt generations.'

Reply. By covenant, muſt be here meant, either—firſt, *that covenant* which, by way of eminence, and on account of the promiſes contained in it, is called the covenant of grace; or, ſecondly, the covenant of circumciſion. If the firſt be intended, we by no means deny but it is an ever-

laſting covenant, and never in time nor in eternity to be forgotten: yet this covenant is not, as has already been fully ſhown, what gave viſibility to a church in Abraham's family. If the ſecond be the one meant, then its everlaſting continuance is equal to the everlaſting inheritance which was given to the ſeed of Abraham in the land of Canaan. This covenant of circumciſion was commanded, and this promiſed inheritance in the land of Canaan was given, in Gen. xvii. Both are ſaid to be everlaſting, yet in a limited ſenſe: for when the Romans, under Titus and Veſpaſian, deſtroyed the Jewiſh church and nation, their inheritance was removed, and their covenant of circumciſion was of no uſe, ſave to continue them a diſtinct people, that they might be a reproach, a taunt, and a by-word, among all nations; and alſo to make it manifeſt in future, that God's predictions by the prophets were of him. But the public is deſired to notice, that whatever Mr. Worceſter might intend by the everlaſting covenant, that it hath nothing to do with the main object which he would eſtabliſh by it, namely, that the goſpel church and Jewiſh are one and the ſame church: for that covenant by which the Jewiſh church was conſtituted, had nothing to do with the formation of the goſpel church.

After Mr. Worceſter had adduced as many texts as he pleaſed, which were foreign from his point, he ſays, page 31, 'Such, my hearers, is a compendious view of the ſcripture proofs, that the covenant which was made with Abraham, and by which the church was conſtituted in his family, was intended to be perpetual, or to continue throughout all generations. I ſay, a compendious view; for in order to give an ample and complete view, we ſhould be obliged to preſent the whole ſcriptures in their connexion. The whole ſcriptures, in their connexion teſtify, that Abraham is, under God, the father of the church; that to him and his ſeed all the promiſes were made; that the church, built on the foundation of the apoſtles and prophets, is one; that the covenant confirmed in Chriſt, with Abraham and his ſeed, four hundred and thirty years before the commencement of the Moſaic diſpenſation, was never to be diſannulled.'

Here Mr. Worceſter does, as he has done in all his preceding arguments, mix truth and error together. We all grant, and fully believe, that the covenant which was confirmed of God in Chriſt four hundred and thirty years before the law, was never to be diſannulled. But we all

deny, and fully disbelieve, that the church in Abraham's family was formed by the giving or by the observing of that covenant; and Paul, as we have already observed, shows us, and declares to us, by giving us the year in which that covenant was confirmed, that it was not. At the time of the confirmation of this covenant, there was no visible church in Abraham's family, nor for many years after.

Mr. Worcester has, through all his arguments, taken for granted the only thing which it was necessary to prove. Had he only proved this one thing, namely, That the covenant of promise, which was manifested to Abraham in Ur, or Haran, and confirmed in Christ four hundred and thirty years before the law, was *the covenant* which constituted his family into a visible church; and that all believers, who are interested in this covenant in gospel times, are, of necessary consequence, in the visible gospel church; and that the being interested in this covenant, did in Abraham's time, and does in gospel times, constitute the favoured persons, and no others, members of the visible church; then would we not have contended with him against the *oneness* and *sameness* of the Jewish and gospel churches. But he has done no such thing: nor does he appear to have done any thing else, save it be to prove what no Baptist denies, and then to take for granted what neither saint nor sinner should ever believe. He proves, that the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ four hundred and thirty years before the law, was never to be disannulled. This we all believe.—He takes for granted, that the *Jewish church*, which was instituted upon the covenant of *circumcision*, is one and the same thing with the *gospel church*, whose members are, as the prophet declared they should be, all righteous. This no person ought to believe.

Had he undertaken to prove, that the church of Rome, and that the Protestant church, generally, are formed after the model of the old Jewish church, we should have believed the fact, whether his arguments were to the point or not; for the fact is intuitively evident. But he must not only pervert, add to, and diminish from, but he must change the scripture, before he can prove that the Jewish church and the gospel church are *one* and the *same*.

Mr. Worcester's arguments, and the manner in which he handles the word of God, have repeatedly brought to my mind the words of Jeremiah, ch. v. 31. "The *prophets prophesy falsely*, and the *priests bear rule* by *their means*; and *my people love to have it so*."

In my next, we ſhall ſee Mr. Worceſter altering and changing ſcripture, to bring it to his purpoſe; together with ſome of his continued inconſiſtency. In the mean time, I wiſh to be

The public's, in the ſervice of the Lord Jeſus, &c.

We appeal to the Bible, to ſtubborn facts, and to common ſenſe.

LETTER V.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS,

IN my laſt you were promiſed, that in this you ſhould ſee ſome of Mr. Worceſter's altering and changing the ſcriptures, to bring them to his purpoſe.—We have already ſeen how he confounds, mingles, and miſapplies *covenants;* we will now ſee how he alters the *token* of the covenant of promiſe, and how he changes *promiſe* into *propoſal.* In ſhort, we may ſee how he turns every way, to carry his error in oppoſition to the goſpel, and to perſuade his readers to believe his Judaizing ſcheme.

The inſtances which I am about to lay before you, may ſerve as ſamples of his altering and wreſting the ſcriptures, to give his errors a popular appearance, in the judgment of thoſe who drink down error as water.

Page 32, ſpeaking of circumciſion, the token of the covenant of promiſe, and a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of Abraham's faith, which he had while in uncircumciſion, Mr. Worceſter in the *firſt place* calls it the token, and then immediately adds, or *ſeal* of the covenant. *Token*, or *ſeal.* This changes the matter ſo little as to be hardly perceived. In the *next page* he tells us, that circumciſion was the *token* and *ſeal* of the covenant. Here he makes ſome advance. Yet the difference between, a token *or* ſeal, and a token *and* ſeal, is ſo ſmall, that he might ſuppoſe his readers, generally, would not perceive it.

After having changed the word of God, from *token* of the covenant, to *token* or *ſeal* of the covenant, and to *token and ſeal*, then he drops the ſcripture expreſſion and takes

the papistical substitute, and calls circumcision the *outward seal* of the covenant, the *appointed seal* of the covenant; and by thirty times repeating, in different places, the seal, the *outward* seal, the *appointed seal*, of the covenant, he no doubt supposed that his hearers and readers would take it for granted that he was proceeding upon scripture ground; whereas this is all a mere imposition upon the credulity and prepossession of the public. The word of God, in no place, from Genesis to Revelation, says so much as one word about circumcision, as being a seal of the covenant.

The next thing which we may notice, is his changing *promise* into *proposal*.

Says he, pages 34, 35, 'God's *promise*, then, or *proposal*, to Abraham, was to be a God, not only to him, but also to his seed after him. The same was his *promise*, or *proposal*, to Isaac:—God *promised*, or *proposed*, to Abraham, to be not only his God, but also the God of his seed; so he now *promises*, or *proposes*, to every believing parent, to be not only a God to him, but also to his seed after him: and the same *promise*, or *proposal*, &c.' Five times in these two pages, he *lowers* down the *promise* of God to the level of a proposal.

We will now recur to some more of his inconsistencies, or attend a little farther to his continued inconsistency, which runs through and is the sum of his showey evidence, and is at the foundation of his false reasonings, from beginning to end of his subject.

His other general head is now to be considered, which is,

'II. To consider more particularly what *provision* was made in the *Abrahamic covenant*, for the continuance of the *church formed by it*, and the transmission of the blessings contained in it.'

Here Mr. Worcester must intend, by the Abrahamic covenant, either—first, the *covenant* which was confirmed of God in Christ four hundred and thirty years before the law; or, secondly, the covenant of circumcision. If he intend the first, we have only to observe, what we have shown before, that this covenant never gave visibility to the Jewish church, for it was *manifested* and *confirmed*, and yet there was no visible church for years after: and besides, this covenant continues forever, though the Jewish church is no more. If he intend the second, the covenant of circumcision, we have just to observe, that it hath so passed away, that, *so far as we keep it*, and hope for salvation by it, either *for ourselves* or *for our children*, Christ shall

profit us nothing, Gal. v. 2. Nor are we once told, in the ſcriptures of truth, that any covenant is ſubſtituted in its room.

But he intends the firſt, and nothing is leſs to his purpoſe: for he quotes, page 33, as proof of his propoſition, what Peter ſaid to the Jews, Acts iii. 25, 26. "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, ſaying unto Abraham, And in *thy ſeed ſhall all the kindreds of the earth be bleſſed.* Unto you firſt, God, having raiſed up his Son Jeſus, ſent him to bleſs you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." This quotation fully ſhows what covenant he intends; but what hath this to do with the formation of a viſible church in Abraham's family? Mr. Worceſter might with equal propriety have quoted the firſt chapter of Geneſis, or the laſt of Revelation, and then hence told us, that the church in Abraham's family was founded by the one, or by the other, or by both; and have concluded, that the Jewiſh and Chriſtian churches are *one* and the *ſame.*

Mr. Worceſter, under his ſecond general head, has no formal argument, to prove that proviſion was made in the Abrahamic covenant, for the continuance of the church formed by it, and the tranſmiſſion of the bleſſings contained in it.

If I apprehend his idea with clearneſs, the ſum of the proviſion which was made in the Abrahamic covenant, for the continuance of the church formed by it, and the tranſmiſſion of the bleſſings contained in it, is, according to his notion of the matter, contained in his thirty-ſeventh and thirty-eighth pages, and in the following words: 'For they which are the children of the fleſh (merely) are not the children of God; but the *children* of the *promiſe*, the *children* in *reſpect* to *whom* there is that *faith* and *fidelity* which are the *conditions* of the *promiſe*, are counted for the ſeed. From this paſſage (ſays he) it is, on the one hand, plain, that the *promiſe* to be a God to Abraham, and to his ſeed after him, had reſpect primarily to his natural deſcendants; and, on the other hand, it is equally plain, that merely their being the natural deſcendants of Abraham, did not bring them within the *promiſe.* To be *children* of the *promiſe*, they muſt be *children* of *faith*; *children*, of *whom there is on the part* of the *parent* or *parents*, the *faith* of *Abraham* in the *covenant* of God.'

From theſe premiſes, and the ſame frequently mentioned in Mr. Worceſter's pages, he would have us conclude, with him, that the following inferences are true:—Firſt, That

everlasting salvation is promised to children, on account of the faith of parent or parents. Secondly, That the children should be baptized on the faith of their parents. Thirdly, That all this is corroborative evidence, that the Jewish and gospel churches are *one* and the *same*.

I have several objections against these premises, and also against the conclusions which Mr. Worcester would draw from them.

1. There is no such promise made, that the children shall be saved by or on account of the faith of their parents: besides, God, by the prophet Ezekiel, (ch. xviii.) manifestly speaks against the existence of any such promise.

2. On supposition that such existed in Abraham's day, and exists still, yet no person ever kept the covenant which comprises such a promise; at least, we have no account of any such person. Even Abraham appears to have kept not more than one-eighth of such a covenant: for he had, at least, eight sons, and but *one* of them was a *child* of *promise*.

3. Suppose such a covenant exists, and also suppose all godly parents obey this covenant, it does not hence follow that their children should be baptized, before they are manifestly made partakers of the promise.

For the sake of showing, and still farther exposing, the absurdity of Mr. Worcester's theory, I will state a principle, and then reason from it upon *his principles*.

All true Christians have the faith of Abraham in the covenant of God.

From this *principle* I reason thus:—All *children* of *parents* who have the *faith* of *Abraham* in the *covenant* of God, will be finally saved. All *true Christians* have *this faith*: therefore, the *children* of all *true Christians* will be *saved*. Again, all who *shall be saved*, are *true Christians*; therefore, the *children's children* of all true Christians, and that too, to the *latest generation*, shall be *saved*. Again, Abraham had *faith* in the covenant of God, and it was as operative in the father of the faithful as in any of his sons; therefore, all the Ishmaelites, and all the Israelites, and all the infidel and gainsaying Jews, and all the descendants of the sons of Keturah, are all saved, or Mr. Worcester's theory is absurd or false.

Mr. Worcester may reply, 'To be the *natural children* of Abraham, does not bring them within the promise.' Very well. Then the matter stands thus—To be the children of Abraham did not, in his day, bring them within the promise; but to be the children of *one believing parent, now*

does. Hence, one of theſe two things is true; either, firſt, that the promiſe is now different from what it was in Abraham's time; or, ſecondly, Mr. Worceſter's theory is falſe. But if the promiſe be different now from what it was in Abraham's time, then his theory is falſe; for he goes, profeſſedly, upon the ſuppoſition, that it is the ſame: and if the promiſe be the ſame now that it was in the time of Abraham, Mr. Worceſter's theory is ſtill falſe; for the promiſe then was not to Abraham and his ſeed according to the fleſh, but according to the election of grace. Rom. ix. 6—13. To make the beſt of his theory, and of the theory of his brethren, a perſon who has eight ſons, as had Abraham, muſt have eight times as much faith as Abraham had, or they will not be the *children* of *promiſe*; for but one of his was ſo. Thus abſurd and contradictory from ſcripture, facts, and common ſenſe, is Mr. Worceſter's theory.

We have now paſſed over and examined his firſt Sermon, which contains his ſubject; and the following obſervations appear to ariſe as natural deductions.

1. That Mr. Worceſter wholly miſunderſtood his text, as mentioned at the cloſe of Letter II.

2. That his doctrine is not contained in his text, nor ſupported by any of his arguments.

3. That his whole ſeries of arguments is one continued *ſophiſm*, of the firſt magnitude. From argument to argument, he proved what nobody denies, and then aſſumed as proved what none but Judaizing Chriſtians do or ever did believe.

4. That Mr. Worceſter muſt produce better arguments, or the eyes of the underſtanding part of his own denomination will probably diſcover the weakneſs of their cauſe. If he have brought as good arguments as there are, to prove that the goſpel church is but a continuation of the old corrupt Jewiſh church, his cauſe is truly deſperate, and the ſooner forſaken the better.

5. That he muſt have taken the wrong ſide of the ſubject, or a perſon of his good ſenſe would not have laboured ſo hard, and have proved nothing.

What we have yet before us, is Mr. Worceſter's *application*, which is the moſt offenſive part of his performance. But I hope to treat him with Chriſtian mildneſs, whilſt I ſhall be under the diſagreeable neceſſity of rebuking him ſharply, that he and others may fear, for the future, to come forward with temerity, againſt the ſacred cauſe of truth.

In the mean time, I am, &c.

We appeal to the Bible, to stubborn facts, and to common sense.

LETTER VI.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS,

WE now come to what Mr. Worcester calls *Improvement;* in which he does as all, both good and bad, have done, so far as the traditions and prejudices of mortals take the lead, wax worse and worse. Indeed, it is perfectly natural to expect, that if a man sets out but a few degrees in a wrong direction, he will, as he travels on, deviate and wander farther from the right way. Mr. Worcester's having taken such a set off, is the occasion of his inconsistencies and absurdities, in which we have seen him. The inconsistencies, false statements, and misrepresentations, in which we must yet view him, I charitably hope, originate from his erroneous set off, rather than from any wicked design, and set purpose to deceive and impose on the public, and on the church of the Lord Jesus.

In his improvement, his *first* article is, 'We are led (says he) to a grateful and devout contemplation of the great design, the gradual progress, and the ultimate extension and glory of the church of God, originally established in the family of Abraham.'

This article might be so explained as to have a good meaning; but as Mr. Worcester explains it, it has the same erroneous signification as has the preceding Sermon. His object still is, to prove that there is no *new man*, or *body* of *men*, in the *gospel church*, from what composed the Jewish church; and that the former, as well as the latter, is, of right, composed of believers and unbelievers, in direct contradiction to the prophets, to Jesus Christ, and to his apostles; who say, that the gospel church should be, and is, made up of *righteous ones*, of *such* as are *taught of God*, and is an *holy nation*, &c.

In this way also he excludes the mystery, which Paul speaks of, as having been hid in God from the foundation of the world, and which was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is *now revealed* unto his holy apostles and

prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles ſhould be fellow heirs, and of the ſame (new man or) body (with the believing Jews) and partakers of his *promiſe in Chriſt* by the goſpel. According to Mr. Worceſter, there appears to have been no myſtery about the matter: nothing new took place, with relation to the church, when the God of heaven ſat up his kingdom in the world, and called his people by *another name;* at leaſt, nothing new with reſpect to the materials of which the church was compoſed.

If ſome few Gentiles were added to it at the firſt, and more afterwards, this was nothing new. If in proceſs of time more Gentiles than ever before, were added, ſtill this was nothing new or myſterious, any farther than it is myſterious to have an old practice ſomewhat more largely extended: for it had been cuſtomary in many, if not in all, generations of the Jewiſh church, to receive Gentiles into it.

His *ſecond* article, having no particular connexion with the point in debate, may be omitted: however, a note, pages 50, 51, at the concluſion of his remarks on this article, may be noticed.

'Though the covenant (ſays he) is never, on God's part, eſtabliſhed with any but *true believers*, yet *all* who have taken the vows upon them, *ought* to *feel* themſelves *ſacredly bound* to *fulfil their engagements.* If *they have opened their mouths unto the Lord, they cannot go back.*'

All who have taken the *vows* of *God* upon themſelves, ought, no doubt, to feel themſelves ſacredly bound to fulfil their engagement. But what have the wicked and unbelieving to do, to take *God's covenant* into their mouths: yet, ſays Mr. Worceſter, '*If they have opened their mouths unto the Lord, they cannot go back.*'

By greatly miſapplying and wreſting this general truth, That ſuch as have opened their mouths unto the Lord, cannot go back, ſeveral miniſters in the vicinity of Sedgwick have been binding the conſciences of their hearers, to *continue practiſing* the *traditions* of men, becauſe they have, in time paſt, ignorantly covenanted to obſerve them. Some of theſe miniſters are greatly abuſing the forward belief and ignorance of many of their hearers. Theſe miniſters are *unable* to ſhow their people, that the covenant into which they have entered, is in agreement with the command and pattern given; yet they teach, that to *break this covenant*, though *it* be found *neither* in the *Old Teſtament nor* in the *New*, is next to ſacrilege and perjury. Thus they bind their poor people with an heavy burden, of which God

will, I truſt, ere long eaſe them. Thoſe who bound themſelves under an oath to kill Paul, might with as much propriety, have been holden to perſeverance.—It may be the above miniſters are not the *only ones*, who uſe the above method, to retain their people in the *ſhackles* of *papiſtical ſuperſtition*.

His *third* article is, page 51, 'It appears, that a cordial and obedient belief in all which God has *propoſed* in his gracious covenant, is of high and everlaſting importance.'

Truly, whatever God hath *propoſed*, or *promiſed*, in his gracious covenant, is of very high concernment to all to whom this matter appertains, and it ſhould command their cordial and obedient belief. But how doth this ſhow, that Chriſtians have any particular and high connexion with the covenant of circumciſion, by which the viſible church in Abraham's family was inſtituted? Or, what hath this to do with the *oneneſs* and *ſameneſs* of the goſpel and Jewiſh churches? Or, what hath this to do with the ſprinkling of infants? or with infant church memberſhip? or with the certain ſalvation of Iſhmael and Eſau, or of the ſons of Keturah?

If we will hear Mr. Worceſter, he will ſhow us his opinion, page 52, 'It is not, (ſays he) indeed, ſuppoſed to be *certain*, that if you be *unbelieving* and *diſobedient*, *your children* will be finally loſt; for God may, as often in his ſovereign mercy he does, go out of the *limits* of the church, and beſtow his grace on thoſe who are aliens from the commonwealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers from the covenant of promiſe; but if, in this caſe, he does beſtow grace upon your children, it will not be in purſuance of any covenant engagement to you.'

Upon theſe obſervations we may make the following remarks:—

1. Mr. Worceſter places unbelieving children within the limits of the goſpel church.

2. He gives us to underſtand, that it is *probable*, that the children of an unbelieving parent will be finally loſt; yet, he ſays, It is not ſuppoſed to be *certain* that they will be.

3. He informs us, that God *uſually converts* church members, or thoſe within the limits of the church; yet, he ſays, 'God may, as often in his ſovereign mercy he does, go out of the limits of the church, and beſtow his grace' on others.

Mr. Worceſter hath a very different idea of goſpel church members, from what the prophets, Chriſt Jeſus, or the apoſtles had: they conſidered and ſpake of them as being all holy. God never converts, or beſtows regenerating grace, upon any within the *limits* of the goſpel church, ſave it be when he converts an hypocrite, who hath joined the church, by profeſſing to be holy when he was not.

4. Mr. Worceſter inſtructs us to believe, that God beſtows regenerating grace upon children, in purſuance of ſome covenant engagement to their parents. How different this from the Bible! Or, at leaſt, what hath the Bible to do with ſuch an idea? Where or when did God ever enter into covenant with Abraham, Iſaac, or Jacob, or with any other perſon, to beſtow ſaving grace upon their children, in conſequence of any duty performed by parents? If ſuch a covenant exiſts, or ever did exiſt, where is it recorded? If it can be found, which of the children doth it include? the firſt born? or the laſt? or doth it include all?

Have we any information that ſuch a covenant was ever *obſerved* by *man*, or *fulfilled* by the *Lord*? If ſo, where? in what verſe, chapter, or book, of either the Old Teſtament or the New? The fact is, the whole matter appears to be a mere Jewiſh or papiſtical error and ſuperſtition, into which Mr. Worceſter and his brethren appear to have been led, as a thing neceſſary to be believed, to give more plauſible ſupport to the traditionary notion of infant baptiſm.

It is true, the Lord promiſed Abraham to be a God to him and his ſeed after him. It is alſo true, that the Lord ſaid, "I know him, that he will command his children and his houſehold after him, and *they ſhall keep* the way of the Lord, to do juſtice and judgment, *that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath ſpoken of him.*" But here is no promiſe, that upon Abraham's being obedient and faithful, his children *after the fleſh* ſhould be ſpiritual, or regenerate; nor have we information that any of them were ſo, ſave Iſaac, who was the *child* of *promiſe*.

The whole which Mr. Worceſter and others have ſaid of this matter, appears to be a mere prejudice, invented probably in the firſt place to give currency to the traditionary rite of infant baptiſm, and infant ſprinkling; and it is manifeſtly ſtill continued, to ſupport the ſame error.

But, ſays Mr. Worceſter, '*fourthly*, from our ſubject we may infer, that for believing parents to give their children to God in baptiſm, is a great and important duty.'

From what part of his ſubject does he infer this? He hath no where ſhown us, that God hath, in any part of his word, enjoined this, by ſtatute, law, or precept, as a duty, upon any of his friends. But we will hear what he hath to ſay, in ſupport of this inference; for we are willing he ſhould demonſtrate it, if he can.

'When God (ſays Mr. Worceſter) eſtabliſhed his covenant with Abraham, he gave him the ſign of circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith; and in the ſelf-ſame day was Abraham circumciſed and Iſhmael his ſon, and all the men of his houſe, born in the houſe, and bought with money of the ſtranger, were circumciſed with him.' Page 53, he ſays, 'Circumciſion has been diſcontinued, and baptiſm appointed in its place. But no order, no intimation, has been given, that the *ſeal* in its preſent form is not, as it was *expreſsly* required in its ancient form, to be applied to the *children* of the *church*.'

A few natural conſequences from what he here aſſerts, will ſufficiently ſhow its abſurdity.

1. A Carolina planter to-day purchaſes a ſhip-load of Africans, who are worſhippers of devils; to-morrow, their maſter is converted. Now he and his heathen ſlaves muſt be all baptized; for, ſays Mr. Worceſter, Baptiſm hath been appointed in the place of circumciſion, and all the males bought with money were to be circumciſed.

2. All theſe heathen ſlaves belong to the Chriſtian church; for thus it was in the church formed in Abraham's family, if any viſible church ſubſiſted there.

3. The children of all theſe worſhippers of devils, muſt be baptized: for, ſays Mr. Worceſter, '*no order, no intimation*, has been given, that the ſeal in its *preſent form* is not, as it was expreſsly required in its ancient form, to be applied to the *children* of the *church*.'

4. Mr. Worceſter has now, according to his antichriſtian ſcheme, hundreds of heathens *ſealed*, *ſealed* in the *church*, *ſealed* in the *covenant* of *grace*: for 'circumciſion (he tells us) is the *outward*, the *appointed*, *ſeal* of the covenant, and baptiſm is appointed in its place.'

How much like the man of ſin does Mr. Worceſter appear, whilſt he is urging upon the Chriſtian world, or church, principles inevitably connected with ſuch conſequences! When the leaders of God's people will not abide by his word, but take liberty to alter, change, and mangle it at their pleaſure, they make ſtrange work, and plunge themſelves and their followers into many hurtful errors.

One great occaſion of Mr. Worceſter's abſurdities, into which he hath run, and falſe ſtatements which we have already ſeen, and of more which we ſhall ſoon ſee, is his unuſual boldneſs in wreſting the ſcriptures, and aſſerting things which he knew not. Perhaps no one thing hath had greater influence in darkening his mind, and blinding him from the truth, than his remarkable miſtake, in aſſerting, more than *thirty times*, that *circumciſion* and *baptiſm* are the *ſeal* of the covenant of grace. When any perſon acquires a habit of ſaying what is not true, it is not ſtrange, ſhould he believe himſelf, when no other perſon ſhould. This is, no doubt, the caſe with Mr. Worceſter. Speaking of circumciſion and baptiſm, he tells us, page 53, 'The ſeal has, indeed, been altered.'

Reply. It is not fully believed by the writer, that Mr. Worceſter intentionally ſpake falſely; at the ſame time, there is not a word of truth in what he ſays, about circumciſion and baptiſm being a ſeal of the covenant, and of the *ſeal of the covenant being altered.* There is not a ſingle word of this in the ſcriptures of truth. Would the public be perſuaded to ſearch the ſcriptures, as the more noble Bereans did, they would find that infant ſprinkling is all a mere deluſion or invention of men, like this ſeal of the covenant, with which Mr. Worceſter makes ſuch a ſhow of argument.

In pages 53, 54, he ſays, 'Circumciſion was formerly the appointed pre-requiſite of admiſſion into the church of God; baptiſm is now the appointed pre-requiſite of admiſſion into the ſame church. In a word, (ſays he) baptiſm is of the ſame import, and of the ſame uſe in the church, under the preſent diſpenſation, as was circumciſion under the ancient.'

Here is truth and error mixed together, as they are in all his pages. It is true, that circumciſion was formerly and always the appointed pre-requiſite of admiſſion into the Jewiſh church, or it was the initiating ordinance. It is alſo true, that baptiſm is now, and ever was, from the beginning of the goſpel church, the appointed pre-requiſite of admiſſion into it, or it is ever the viſible admiſſion itſelf, notwithſtanding the great miſtakes of Mr. Auſtin and others, as to this matter. But it is not true, that circumciſion and baptiſm are, as Mr. Worceſter ſays they are, pre-requiſites of admiſſion into the ſame church; for in Acts iii. we are informed, that the very perſons who were circumciſed and admitted to the Jewiſh church, were afterwards baptized and added to the goſpel church. It would

be an absurdity to say, that a person was added to a society, of which he was at the time, and had long been, a constant member; but, as absurd as it is, this is Mr. Worcester's notion of the business. His theory is, that the converted Jews were, by baptism, added to the church, of which they had been members from their infancy.

Besides, it is not true, as he asserts, 'that baptism is of the same import in the church under the present dispensation, as was circumcision under the ancient.' For circumcision, when administered, according to the command, at eight days old, only imported, that the subject was a child of Abraham, after the flesh, or a child of a converted or proselyted heathen; whereas baptism, when administered according to the command and pattern given, *imports*, that the subjects of it are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Thus we see, that his theory leads him farther and farther into error and mistake.

Again, says Mr. Worcester, 'The whole analogy of scripture goes to support this sentiment, that baptism has, in fact, taken the place of circumcision;' and then, to establish his sentiment, deduces a passage of scripture which says nothing to the point, but only mentions the circumcision of Christ, which was made *without hands*. If this eleventh verse of the second chapter of Colossians, have *any reference* to *water baptism*, it is all gathered from the twelfth verse, which speaks of being *buried* and *raised* again in baptism. Should we allow Mr. Worcester to be correct, in his application of the eleventh verse, to prove that baptism hath taken the place of circumcision, then it would prove the ruin of two of his ill-supported opinions, with which he hath, of late years, been amusing the public. One is, his traditionary notion of *sprinkling* for baptism; for the text has no intimation of *sprinkling* for baptism, but of being *buried* and *raised again*. The other is, his opinion, that this text in Colossians, and the parallel one in the sixth chapter of Romans, intend spiritual baptism; which they cannot, provided the natural import of the text is, that Christian baptism hath taken the place of Jewish circumcision. In this way Mr. Worcester might make progress in destroying his errors; ruin two old ones by the introduction of a new one. So inconsistent is error, that such as abide in it, cannot make straight paths for their feet.

In the same page, he tells us about an express precept for administering the *covenant* to the *infant seed* of the church, and that the same precept still remains in force,

unleſs expreſsly repealed. His words are, 'There was, under the former diſpenſation, an *expreſs precept* for adminiſtering the *covenant* to the *infant ſeed* of the *church*. That precept, varying only as the *ſeal* is varied, ſtill remains in force, unleſs it have been expreſsly repealed.' Here is the appearance of ſomething new. Under the former diſpenſation, we are told, there was an expreſs precept for *adminiſtering* the COVENANT to the *infant ſeed* of the church; and unleſs this precept have been expreſsly repealed, it ſtill remains in force. Here, if Mr. Worceſter have the truth, we, who are Chriſtian adminiſtrators, muſt adminiſter the *covenant* to the infant ſeed of the Chriſtian church. What *covenant?* The *covenant* of baptiſm? No, for there is no ſuch covenant mentioned. The *covenant* of circumciſion? No; for if we be circumciſed Chriſt ſhall profit us nothing. What *covenant* then? The *covenant* of grace, or the new covenant? No, for to adminiſter that is God's prerogative. But we may be more inquiſitive than Mr. Worceſter will allow; for he tells us, (after he had taken every thing for granted, which it was neceſſary for him to prove) that it is *arrogance* for us to demand any explicit precept, in the New Teſtament, for our practice in relation to infants, under the new diſpenſation. His words are, 'It is *arrogance*, therefore, to demand, for we have no right to expect, an explicit renewal of this precept to be found in the New Teſtament, any more than of the precept for the obſervance of the ſabbath.' This is a ſhort way of doing buſineſs, to tell us to believe without evidence, and practiſe without precept or example; and, if we heſitate, call us *arrogant*.

Mr. Worceſter's note, pages 55, 56, muſt now have a moment's attention, that the public may ſee the fallacy, deception, or imprudence of the man, when he manages his opponents' arguments. If he will confeſs his ignorance of the Baptiſts' ſentiments, then what he hath aſſerted may be paſſed over; but otherwiſe, his management is highly cenſurable. But we will hear a compreſſed view of this note, and two former ones, as put together by himſelf. His words are,

'The very palpable inconſiſtencies, noticed in this and two former notes, it may not be improper to exhibit together in one point of view.

'1. The covenant made with Abraham and his ſeed, was only a temporal covenant, and formed only a temporal church; yet the great promiſe of the covenant had reſpect, not to natural, but only to ſpiritual ſeed!

"2. Though the great promise of the covenant had respect, not to natural, but only to spiritual seed, yet the covenant was long ago abolished. Since the coming of Messiah, God is no longer, by covenant, the God of Abraham and his (*spiritual*) seed!

'3. Though the great promise of the covenant had no respect to natural seed, yet the natural seed were not only admitted to the seal of the covenant, but even, as members, to all the privileges of the church!

'4. Though the Abrahamic church was a type of the Christian church, and in that church children were admitted to the seal of the covenant, and to all the privileges of members; yet in the gospel church, they are neither to be recognized as members, nor even regarded as fit subjects for the seal of the covenant!

'Such (says he) are a few of the absurdities of the Anti-pædobaptist scheme.'

If Mr. Worcester knew no better, he is not to be *envied;* if he knew better, and yet hath given this sophistical view of his opponents' sentiments, he is to be disesteemed.

We will now supply, in the above particulars, what Mr. Worcester ought not to have omitted. Afterwards the public will judge, whether absurdities attach to the Baptists, or darkness and misrepresentation to Mr. Worcester. It ought, however, to be previously observed, that the Baptists never advanced the absurdities which he sets to their account: he manufactured them to his liking, and then charged them upon his opponents. It may also be observed, that the Baptists dislike his antiscriptural *seal*, which he sees fit to affix to the covenant.

The above particulars, somewhat rectified, are,

1. The *covenant of circumcision*, made with Abraham and his seed, was only a temporal covenant, and formed only a temporal church; yet the *great promise* of the *covenant of grace* had respect, not to *natural*, but only to *spiritual* seed!

2. Though the great promise of the covenant of grace had respect, not to natural, but only to spiritual seed, yet the covenant of circumcision was long ago abolished. Since the coming of Messiah, God is no longer, by the covenant of circumcision, the God of Abraham and his (spiritual or) natural seed!

3. Though the great promise of the covenant of grace had no respect to the natural seed, yet the natural seed were not only admitted to circumcision, the seal (he should have

ſaid token) of the covenant of grace, but even, as members, to all the privileges of the Jewiſh church!

4. Though the Abrahamic church was a type of the Chriſtian church, and in that church children were admitted to circumciſion, the ſeal (the token) of the covenant of grace, and to all the privileges of members; yet, in the goſpel church, they are neither to be recognized as members, nor even regarded as fit ſubjects for baptiſm, the ſeal, token, or *outward profeſſion* of *internal righteouſneſs*, and of *their being partakers of the covenant of grace!*

At the cloſe of each of theſe *ſuppoſed* Antipædobaptiſt abſurdities, he adds a note of exclamation, or admiration; and, indeed, it is a little to be admired, that he ſhould, in four inſtances at once, pervert the true ſentiments of the Baptiſts, and of his own free choice, turn them into abſurdities; and, after he had finiſhed the matter, wonder at it himſelf, and by his notes of admiration, ſet the world at wondering.

The public will determine whether there be any abſurdity in the above particulars, ſave what Mr. Worceſter has occaſioned by his unſcriptural ſeal, and by miſrepreſenting the ſentiments of the Baptiſts.

In pages 57, 58, he has another note, which is nearly as full of error and palpable miſrepreſentations as the preceding. But the writer is tired in correcting a man, whoſe errors are as numerous as his lines. However, we muſt attend him farther, for ſome of his moſt reprehenſible management is yet before us.

With fixed intention to defend truth, and to detect error,

I am, &c.

We appeal to the Bible, to ſtubborn facts, and to common ſenſe.

LETTER VII.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS,

YOUR attention would not be ſo long arreſted, by remarks on Mr. Worceſter's miſtakes, had he not

have laboured so hard to deceive you, and employed such unwarrantable means to accomplish it. But brevity is not greatly to be consulted, when truth is either to be vindicated and wrested from the devourer, or first principles of the visible church of Christ to be given up.

Perhaps no Protestant ever made a bolder attack on truth, than Mr. Worcester has done, or exposed himself more in the attempt. Says he, page 59, 'For more than three thousand years, the *seal* of the covenant was *universally* applied to the *children* of the *church*, *no one forbidding it*.—It was thus for the space of twelve or fifteen hundred years after the introduction of the Christian dispensation.'

Now, there is not so much as a shadow of truth in all this; it is at best one of Mr. Worcester's bare-faced mistakes. I will not accuse Mr. Worcester of lying to support a sinking cause, but this I will say, he is either extremely ignorant of the controversy in which he writes, or he *willingly* makes mistakes. A volume of testimonies, in direct contradiction to what he asserts, might be easily produced. Take the following as a sample.

The Rev. Mr. Fuller informs us,* that Christianity had a considerable footing in England, not far from the year 63, in the reign of Arviragus. From the year 63 to the year 469, Christianity prevailed greatly in England; and multitudes of martyrs of Jesus were slain there, during the Roman heathen persecutions, particularly in that under Diocletian and Maximian his colleague.†

In the year 469, the Saxons invaded England, and soon made a complete conquest, so as to drive all the Christians into Cambria, which is now called Wales. Here, for upwards of an hundred years, the oppressed and persecuted remains of the British church, had a place of some rest; till St. or rather Sinful Austin, in the year 596, came into England, with about forty of his papistical associates.‡ He met with great success in converting the heathen Saxons to the superstitions of popery. After he had accomplished this business, his next was to convert the old British church (which had fled into the woods and mountains of Wales) from the order and discipline which they had received from the apostles or primitive missionaries, and kept pure till that time.§

* Eng. Bap. Hist. p. 456. † Rapin's Hist. Eng. Vol. I. p. 28.
‡ Fox's Mart. p. 149.
§ Fox's Mart. p. 153. Fuller's Church History, p. 61.

All which I need here ſhow, to eſtabliſh my point, is, that the remains of the primitive Britiſh church were Antipædobaptiſts, or that they did not, and would not, baptize their children; which is perfectly evident, from the accommodating propoſals which Auſtin made to them. His propoſals were, "That they ſhould embrace the ceremonies of the church of Rome, particularly, in the time of keeping Eaſter, and in *baptizing their children.*" He laboured to bring them to theſe ſuperſtitions of the *mother of harlots*, and threatened them with deſtruction, if they would not comply. Theſe noble Britons determined to abide in the doctrines and ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt, and would not ſubmit to the traditions of men.

The conſequence of their fidelity to their Lord, was fierce perſecution and great deſtruction, with which Auſtin threatened them; and which, upon their refuſal, it is ſuppoſed he procured to be brought upon them by Ethelfride, king of Northumberland, who ſlew eleven or twelve hundred of them in one day, at one place.* Here it is certain, that the perſecuted Britiſh church, about the year 600, were Antipædobaptiſts; and it is equally certain, by fair deduction, that their anceſtors were ſo, from the firſt planting of Chriſtianity in England.

This is one impregnable contradiction to Mr. Worceſter's too bold aſſertion: for theſe truly Chriſtian Britons not only did not practiſe infant baptiſm, but choſe death rather than to defile the church of Chriſt with this popiſh ſuperſtition.

Salmaſius and Suiſerus, as quoted by Mr. Booth, Vol. II. page 76, informs us, that in the two firſt centuries, no one was baptized, except, being inſtructed in the faith, and acquainted with the doctrine of Chriſt, he was able to profeſs himſelf a believer; becauſe of thoſe words, "*He that believeth, and is baptized.*" Firſt, therefore, he was a believer. Thence the order of catechumens in the church. Then alſo, it was the conſtant cuſtom to give the Lord's ſupper to thoſe catechumens immediately after their baptiſm.†

Theſe two witneſſes teſtify, that Mr. Worceſter has not given us the truth.

* Hiſt. Eng. Bapt. pref. p. 22, 23, 24.

† Epiſt. ad Juſtum Patium, apud Van Dale Hiſt. Baptiſm. Suiſuri Theſau. Eccleſ. ſub. vou Suraxis. Tom. ii. p. 1136.

Johanus Bohemius, as mentioned by Mr. Andrews, says, "It was, in time past, the custom to administer baptism to them that were instructed in the faith; but afterwards, when it was thought and adjudged needful to eternal life, to be baptized, it was ordained that new-born children should be baptized, and godfathers were appointed, who should make confession and renounce the devil on their behalf.*

The Petrobrusians were condemned, in the Lateran council, under Pope Innocent II. in the year 1139, for rejecting infant baptism.†

If no one forbade the baptism of new-born infants, how came it to pass that Augustine, in the fourth century, warned his hearers and readers to beware of the Baptists, and of the Antipædobaptists of his day; and when writing of infant baptism, to say, "*Let none so much as whisper any other doctrine in your ears?*" And how is it that the council at Carthage, in the fifth century, should say, "It is our pleasure, that whosoever denieth that new-born infants are to be baptized—let him be accursed?" Besides, *if no one forbade infant baptism, for twelve or fifteen hundred years* after the *commencement of the Christian dispensation*, how is it that Mr. Worcester brings forward Walafrid Strabo, of the *ninth century*, as representing that infant baptism took its origin in the time of Austin? (as it manifestly did in England.) How is this matter? How can it be reconciled, that so many spake, and spake bitterly, against those who rejected infant baptism, in those early times, if not one, in those times, ever forbade or spake against that superstitious practice? This is enough to evince that Mr. Worcester's pen is *incorrect*.

In pages 59, 60, Mr. Worcester has the following noticeable expressions: 'If during the last three hundred years, there have been some, in the different parts of Christendom, who have forbidden little children to be brought to Christ, and denied the application of the seal of the covenant to them; yet, thanks be to God, in respect to this interesting matter, the *great body* of the *church* has still adhered to the divine institute, and to the *uniform practice of the faithful in all former ages*.'

In this quotation, we find one false insinuation and one groundless assertion, provided the church of Christ, and not

* Andrews's Vindic. p. 106. † De Rebat Eccles. c. 26.

the church of Antichrist, be intended, as having adhered to the institute of infant baptism; *divine institute* (*traditionary* or *superstitious institute*, he should have said.)

His false insinuation is, that the Baptists have forbidden little children to be brought to Christ. There is no truth in this. He has not produced, and it is believed he cannot produce, so much as a single instance, in which a Baptist hath forbidden little children either to be brought to Christ or to come to him. Does he suppose, that to bring little children to baptism, is bringing them to Christ? It is true, the Papists may have some such absurd notion; but the Bible has never told us, that this was bringing them to Christ; nor hath Christ, nor his disciples, nor his apostles, ever once mentioned such a practice. Not a word, from Genesis to Revelation, is said, about infant baptism, much less of its being a *divine institute*, or of this being the way to bring little children to Christ.

His groundless assertion is this: 'The great body of the church has still adhered to the divine institute (infant baptism) and to the uniform practice of the faithful in all former ages.'

In this groundless assertion, there are two very great mistakes. The first is, that the great body of the church, meaning the church of Christ, adheres to infant baptism. The other is, that the faithful, in all former ages, have adhered to this practice.

Two definitions appear to be both lawful and expedient, in this place.

One is, *The visible church of Christ, is composed of all those righteous ones, who have been baptized upon a profession of their faith in Christ.*

The other is, *The visible church of Antichrist, is composed of all those, who have been baptized, or sprinkled, in manifest unbelief.*

These plain definitions may cause some hard judgments to be pronounced against me, by designing and by erroneous men; but with me, it is a small thing to be judged of man's judgment.

We will now take notice of Mr. Worcester's *groundless assertion*. He says, 'The great body of the church adheres to infant baptism.' Had he said, The great body of the church of Antichrist adheres to it, no body could, with truth, contradict him. For, infant baptism hath been one of the main pillars of Antichrist, from the beginning; and some of the seeds of this appear to have been sowing, by

the Judaizing teachers, among the churches of Galatia, even in Paul's day. But nothing is farther from the truth, than this sentiment, that the great body of the church of Christ hath adhered to infant baptism. Instead of this, not so much as any single branch of this church, in any place or age of the world, hath ever adhered to it. Infant baptism is peculiar to Antichrist's kingdom; and it is expedient, that such as fear God, and are not, through prejudice, both blind and deaf to truth, should have here explained to them, what hath, perhaps more than any other thing, darkened the minds of many good men, in this matter. It is this,—Those who have written the history of the church, have given us the history of Antichrist's church, rather than that of Christ's. Whenever they have given us any hints of Christ's church, they have taken their documents, or information, from the polluted pens of Antichrist's friends, who have, uniformly, represented Christ's church as some deformed sect of heretics. Mr. Worcester appears to have derived his information from the same source, and to have possessed too much of the same judgment.

Mr. Worcester is not so blamable for not possessing the history of the church of Christ, as he is for not knowing her, when he sees her. For the church of Christ hath been hidden, in the place which God appointed for her, for twelve hundred and sixty years; and it is not many years, or at most, not many ages, since she left her wilderness station, and hath been showing herself in the world; and her history hath not yet been written, or not collected into regular form. But Mr. Worcester, and his brethren too, are very much to be blamed, that they do not know the visible church of Christ, wherever she discovers herself; for though her history be not written, yet a description of her is given, and that plainly too, by Moses and the prophets, by Christ and the apostles. See Deut. xviii. 15, 19. Psa. xxii. 22. Isa. viii. 18. liv. 13. Jer. xxxi. 31—34. John vi. 45. Acts iii. 22, ult. Rom. i 6, 7. 1 Cor. i. 2. 2 Cor. i. 1. Eph. i. 1 Thes. i. 1—4. Heb. ii. 11, 12, 13. viii. 8—11. 1 Pet. ii. 9. In these texts, and in many others, is the Christian church designated, and plainly too; hence it is a sin of ignorance, not to know her. But it may be a sin of another kind to oppose her, as he and many his brethren have dared very boldly to do.

If many of those, who oppose the gospel church, be, as we hope they are, the people of God, spiritually, they ought

to hear his word, Rev. xviii. 4. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of *her* (Antichrist's) sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Because that many good people are found within the limits of Antichrist, this is no argument that Antichrist and Christ are *one:* but this is exactly what was to be, just before the *destruction* of spiritual Babylon, or the church of Antichrist; some of God's people were to be in her, and now the command is, *that they come out.*

His other groundless assertion, 'That the faithful, in all former ages, have adhered to the practice of infant baptism,' is refuted by what has been just now said. If more be thought needful, it will be found in what is soon to be said upon Mr. Worcester's note, which is now to come under consideration.

The public are earnestly desired to grant me a careful attention, for I am endeavouring to plead the cause of Christ's rising church, against the last struggles of Antichrist.

In the note, pages 60, 61, 62, the spirit of Antichrist appears to have done its utmost, in spreading, perhaps, the last blind over the minds of God's people, in our land of free inquiry. A greater stretch of misrepresentation and groundless assertion, perhaps never escaped the pen of man, than Mr. Worcester hath given, in the long note to which we shall soon attend. The principal part of this note will be inserted, by paragraphs and sentences, that the public may have a full view of Mr. Worcester's supposed strength, and may the more fully discover his weaknefs, deception, falsehood, and absurdity. These are hard accusations; but if they be literally and abundantly just, as applied to Mr. Worcester's writings, and if he have made use of such kind of management, in opposition to the church of Christ Jesus, and to prevent her friends from beholding and embracing her, ought he not to be exposed, and truth vindicated, though it bring upon his writings just contempt and infamy?

This note begins thus:—'As there was no dispute about baptism, in the first ages of Christianity, it should not be expected, that much would be found particularly on the subject, in the writings of those ages.'

Answer. There is much found on the subject of baptism, in the writings of the first ages of Christianity; but not a word for *infant* baptism, in the two first centuries, as is shown at large by Dr. Gale, in his Reflections.

'But (ſays Mr. Worceſter) becauſe there is nothing directly on the ſubject, either for or againſt infant baptiſm, in the fragments which have come down to us, of the writings of the firſt century, the Antipædobaptiſts, with an aſſurance peculiar to themſelves, have undertaken to aſſert, not to prove, that during the firſt century, infant baptiſm was not practiſed in the church. With equal propriety we might aſſert, even had we no proof to ſupport our aſſertion, that it was practiſed univerſally: but we are not reduced to this extremity. The ſacred truth is, there is as much evidence, as, from the ſtate of the caſe, could reaſonably be expected, that during the firſt century, and for ſeveral ſucceeding ages, infant baptiſm was practiſed in the church, univerſally, and without contradiction or queſtion.'

Anſwer. In the writings of the firſt century, we have the beſt evidence which the circumſtances of the caſe admit, that infant baptiſm was then unknown. It was not ſpoken againſt explicitly, to be ſure, and for this plain reaſon—the ſcheme of infant baptiſm was not then invented. But what is ſaid by Barnabas, in his Epiſtle to the Corinthians, and by Hermas, in his Viſions, prove this—that infants were neceſſarily excluded. The firſt ſpeaks of the *perſons* who were *baptized*, as *living* upon the *belief* of the *promiſes* and of the *word*. The other ſpeaks of the *baptized*, as having been taught in the word. In ſhort, they both give us an account of believers' baptiſm, and of that only.* This is altogether inconſiſtent with the *ſuppoſition*, that they *practiſed infant unbelievers'* baptiſm. Yes, it is wholly inconſiſtent with the idea, that when heathen parents or maſters were converted, their unconverted children and ſervants were admitted to baptiſm.

Theſe fathers ſaid all which their circumſtances permitted, to put infant baptiſm out of countenance in our day. It is abſurd to require that they ſhould have ſaid more, and equally abſurd to infer, as Mr. Worceſter does, that becauſe they did not ſay more than their circumſtances permitted, they implicitly favoured it.

'But (ſays Mr. Worceſter) the Antipædobaptiſts, with an aſſurance peculiar to themſelves, have undertaken to aſſert, not to prove, that during the firſt century, infant baptiſm was not practiſed in the church.'

* Gale's Reflections, Let. II.

Reply. We have appealed to the Bible, to ſtubborn facts, and to common ſenſe. If all or any of theſe may be admitted as witneſs, and their evidence taken as proof, then we have undertaken *to prove*, and not *merely to aſſert*, that infant baptiſm was not practiſed during the firſt century of the church. The Bible is not only ſilent as to the practice of infant baptiſm, but enjoins pre-requiſites to baptiſm, which are incompatible with the capacity of infants. One Bible pre-requiſite, and it is, in the preſent caſe, equally concluſive with a thouſand, is this—the ſubjects of baptiſm muſt be *firſt taught*, and *ſo taught* as to be viſible believers, Matt. xxviii. Mark xvi. This is the Bible teſtimony, as to the firſt century, and indeed, for every other, as to infant baptiſm and the practice of it.

Stubborn facts ſay, that the fathers, the biſhops and elders of the church, in the firſt century, practiſed as the Bible enjoins, and baptized thoſe who were previouſly taught and brought to believe; and we have not one line of the contrary practice, that is, of unbelievers' baptiſm, the firſt error of Antichriſt.*

Common ſenſe teſtifies, that if the fathers of the firſt century baptized, as they tell us they did, upon a profeſſion of faith by the candidates, and ſay not a word of baptizing any without ſuch a profeſſion, then Mr. Worceſter has no claim upon our belief, when he, without a ſhadow of evidence, tells us, that 'the *ſacred truth* is, there is as much evidence, as, from the ſtate of the caſe, could reaſonably be expected, that during the firſt century, and for ſeveral ſucceeding ages, infant baptiſm was practiſed in the church, univerſally, and without contradiction or queſtion.'

We ſhall now examine his argument, or rather what he hath told us, and meant we ſhould take upon his mere teſtimony.

'In the writings of Clemens Romanus and Hermes Paſtor, both cotemporaries with the apoſtles, (ſays he) paſſages are extant, which, by fair implication, prove the practice of infant baptiſm in their day.' Mr. Worceſter gives us not a line from the writings of either; nor does he direct us where we may find ſo much as a ſcrap, which implies any ſuch thing. If the reader will take the trouble to look int Dr. Gale's Reflections on Dr. Wall's hiſtory of infant baptiſm, or into Hermes Paſtor's Viſions, Lib. I. Viſ. iii. chap. 2, 5, 6, 7. he may diſcover the reaſon why Mr. Wor-

* See Gale's Reflections.

ceſter made no quotations. It is evident, none would have been to his purpoſe: for they ſay not a word about infant baptiſm, or any thing which looks like it, or implies it, (if we may credit either Dr. Wall or Dr. Gale) unleſs we conſider theſe fathers as being *Papiſts*, and then, becauſe they held to the corruption of nature, conclude that they muſt to infant baptiſm, as an antidote. But this argument is equally good, to prove that all the Calviniſtic Baptiſts hold to infant baptiſm.

We may hence ſee, with ſufficient clearneſs, why Mr. Worceſter ventured no quotations from the fathers of the firſt century: and for the ſame reaſon, probably, he ventured none from the fathers of the ſecond. He only tells us, that 'Juſtin Martyr and Irenæus are more particular and clear, to the ſame purpoſe.' Yes, ſays he, '*more particular and clear*,' yet not ſo much as mention the ſubject.

As Mr. Worceſter hath not ſeen fit to give us a line from the writings of the ancient fathers of the two firſt centuries, I will ſet before the public a ſhort quotation out of the apology which Juſtin Martyr made before the Roman emperor; it may be taken as a ſample of the ſentiment of the church in his time, as to baptiſm and the ſubjects of baptiſm. The paſſage, as Mr. Reeves tranſlates it, is, "I ſhall now lay before you (ſays Juſtin to the emperor) the manner of dedicating ourſelves to God through Chriſt, upon our converſion; for, ſhould I omit this, I might ſeem not to deal ſincerely, in this account of the Chriſtian religion. As *many*, therefore, as *are perſuaded* and *believe*, that the things *taught* and *ſaid* by us are *true*, and moreover take upon them to *live accordingly*, are taught to *pray* and *aſk* of *God*, *with faſting*, the *forgiveneſs* of their former ſins;—and *then*, and *not till then*, they are brought to a *place* of *water*, and—are WASHED in the name of God the Father and Lord of all, and of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.—The reaſon of this (ſays Juſtin) we have from the apoſtles; for having nothing to do in our *firſt birth*, but *being begotten* by *neceſſity*, or *without our own conſent*.—The penitent, who now *makes* his *ſecond birth* (or his public putting on the Lord Jeſus) an *act* of *his own choice*, has called over him the name of God the Father and Lord of all things,—And, moreover, the perſon baptized and illuminated, is baptized in the name of the Lord Jeſus,—and in the name of the Holy Ghoſt." *

* Booth's Pædobaptiſm, Vol. II. p. 110, 111.

This is one of Mr. Worceſter's witneſſes, and he is a good one, to ſhow that Mr. Worceſter has endeavoured to palm an impoſition upon the public: for here is not merely a ſilence, as to infant baptiſm, but a complete prohibition of it. For the Martyr *contraſts* our *natural birth* with our *baptiſm*, and tells us, that *one* is *without our conſent*, but the *other* an act of our *own choice*. This is the *Bible way*, this is the Chriſtian way, this is the *good old* way, to receive baptiſm as an *act* of *our own choice*. But to be baptized without our conſent, as all infants are, is the *way* of man's invention, the papiſtical *way*, the way of Antichriſt.

Nor does Irenæus, nor any one of the fathers of the ſecond century, ſay one word, which he can prove to his purpoſe.*

Mr. Worceſter next comes down to the third century, and tells us, 'Tertullian and Origen are explicit on the ſubject.' Then we may expect ſomething to the purpoſe. And what ſays Tertullian? Not a word which Mr. Worceſter quotes; nor had he any thing to the point, to quote from him. But we will hear what Tertullian ſays, for he has ſomething to ſay, and ſomething too which Mr. Worceſter would be glad not to hear.

Tertullian, ſpeaking of repentance, of the uſe and neceſſity of it, ſays, "Baptiſm is the ſeal of faith, which faith is begun and adorned by the faith of repentance. We are not, therefore, *waſhed*, that we *may leave ſinning*, but becauſe we have *already done it*, and are *already purified in our hearts*."† Dr. Gale, upon theſe words of Tertullian, makes the following obſervations, (p. 512, 513.) "Are theſe the words of a man, who thought baptiſm might be given to infants? Are infants already purified in heart? Have they *left ſinning?* and are they *therefore waſhed?* Have they any ſuch faith as Tertullian here ſpeaks of? and yet he ſays, Baptiſm, the *ſeal* of *this ſort* of *faith particularly;* and therefore, doubtleſs he thought the ſeal could not be regularly applied, where this faith was wanting."

This is one of Mr. Worceſter's witneſſes for the beginning of the third century; and we will hear a little more of his teſtimony. Mr. Booth gives us the following ſentiments of Tertullian, out of Du Pin's tranſlation: "Jeſus Chriſt ſays, indeed, *Hinder not little children from coming to*

* See Gale's Ref. throughout, Booth's Pædobap. Vol. II. p. 79—86. and even Dr. Wall himſelf.

† De Penetentiâ, cap. vi. p. 125. B.

me; but that they ſhould come to him as ſoon as they are advanced in years, as ſoon as they have learned their religion, when they may be taught whither they are going, when they are become Chriſtians, when they begin to be able to know Jeſus Chriſt.—Thoſe who ſhall duly conſider the great weight and moment of this divine ſacrament, will rather be *afraid* of *making too much haſte to receive it*, than to defer it for ſome time, ſo they may be the better capable of receiving it more worthily." *

The public will probably be at no heſitancy, why Mr. Worceſter produced no quotations for the two firſt centuries, and for the beginning of the third: it is ſufficiently obvious he had none to offer. It is not a little ſurpriſing, that he ſhould preſume ſo much upon the credulity of the public, as to ſuppoſe they would, in ſuch an important matter as the preſent, take his bare word, as the ground of their belief, for the ſpace of more than two hundred of the firſt years of Chriſtianity.

The firſt appearance of evidence, which Mr. Worceſter brings forward, in ſupport of infant baptiſm, is in the following reputed words of Origen: "What is the reaſon, that, whereas the baptiſm of the church is given for forgiveneſs, *infants* alſo, by the uſage of the church, are baptized; when, if there were nothing in infants which wanted forgiveneſs or mercy, baptiſm would be needleſs to them?" This quotation Mr. Worceſter probably took from Rufinus's corrupt, and very little to be depended upon, tranſlation of Origen, or from ſome author who had drawn it from that ſource.

There are two reaſons, which render it probable, that even Origen, who lived in the middle, if not towards the latter end, of the third century, did not believe in infant baptiſm, and has ſaid nothing in its favour. One reaſon is, That nothing can be found, in any of his writings which are now extant, to ſhow that he believed any ſuch thing. The other is, There are ſome paſſages, in his original Greek, which appear not reconcileable with the ſentiment, that Origen was a Pædobaptiſt. I will mention one, and one too which Dr. Wall has ſelected out of the original writings of Origen, conſidering it to be as much to his purpoſe as any paſſage which can be depended upon as being Origen's. Mr. Booth gives us the paſſage from Dr. Wall, thus: "One may inquire, when it is that the *angels*,

* Booth's Pædobaptiſm, Vol. II. p. 92, 93.

here ſpoken of, are ſet over thoſe little ones, ſhowed or ſignified by our Saviour; whether they take the care and management of them, from the time when they, by the waſhing of regeneration, whereby they were new-born, do as new-born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, and are no longer ſubject to any evil power, or from their birth, according to the foreknowledge of God and his predeſtinating of them, &c."*

We have two reaſons to offer, why it is not ſuppoſable that Origen intended infants in age, but muſt have intended infants in grace. One is, He ſpeaks of them as deſiring the ſincere milk of the word, which infants of a day or a month old are incapable of doing. The other reaſon is, He is ſpeaking of thoſe little ones whoſe angels do always behold the face of God in heaven. Theſe little ones are conſidered by Calviniſtic divines, if not by all others, to be believers in Chriſt.

Mr. Worceſter in the next place brings forward Cyprian, who was biſhop of Carthage, and preſident of a council which was holden in that city in the year 253. Before which council this queſtion was diſcuſſed, "At what age ſhall infants be baptized?" Infant baptiſm being, at this time, ſo novel a thing, that the biſhops were in doubt at what age it ſhould be adminiſtered.

This council, compoſed of African biſhops, is the firſt we read of, which explicitly admitted the ſuperſtitious and antichriſtian practice of infant baptiſm. Not an European or Aſiatic biſhop does Mr. Worceſter produce, for even the third century, who ſpake one word in favour of infant baptiſm: nor does he produce any credible evidence, that any in Africa adopted this practice, till the year 253, or nearly that date. And we confeſs, that we are not careful nor ſolicitous to ſhow, that infant baptiſm did not, at this time, begin to prevail conſiderably: for not far from this time, as I may at a future period ſhow at large, the church of Jeſus began to take her place in the wilderneſs, as God had appointed her.

Mr. Worceſter now comes down to the fourth century, and manifeſtly with a conſiderable degree of courage, as well he may, for now he hath ſomething to ſhow for infant baptiſm: for the error for which he pleads, had not a little prevailed, before the end of this century. Says he, 'Gregory Nazianzen, Baſil, Ambroſe, Chryſoſtome, and

* Wall's Hiſt. of Inf. Bap. Part I. p. 33.

Jerome, all of whom flouriſhed within about a hundred years of Origen and Cyprian, are all explicit on the ſubject; explain the deſign of infant baptiſm, mention it as coming in the place of circumciſion, and ſpeak of it as the univerſal and undiſputed practice of the church.'

'Mr. Worceſter, even in this fourth century, which was famous for the invention of ſuperſtitious ceremonies, runs a little too faſt, and takes more for granted in ſix lines, than he will be able to prove in the ſame number of years. We are willing to grant him every word of truth, for we fear nothing from that quarter; but we muſt correct him ſtep by ſtep, that no impoſition may be palmed on the public. He tells us, that Gregory Nazianzen, Baſil, who was biſhop of Ceſarea; Ambroſe, who was biſhop of Milan; Chryſoſtome, biſhop alternately of Antioch and Conſtantinople; and Jerome, monk of Jeruſalem, are, all of them, not only explicit on the ſubject of infant baptiſm, but that they ſpake of it as the univerſal and undiſputed practice of the church.

We by no means deny that infant baptiſm was, in this century, practiſed in the church of Rome; but that it was the univerſal practice of the church, as Mr. Worceſter aſſerts, is not true, unleſs he intends the univerſal practice of the church of Antichriſt, which now very manifeſtly ſhowed herſelf, and had already driven the goſpel church into her hiding place.

A few quotations will expoſe Mr. Worceſter's miſtakes.

"Gregory Nazianzen, ſpeaking of ſuch as died without baptiſm, inſtances in ſuch as were not baptized (*dia nēpiotita*) *by reaſon of their infancy*. And the ſame Nazianzen himſelf, though a biſhop's ſon, and a long time trained up under his father's care, was not baptized till he came to age, as he tells us in his own life." *

"Again, St. Gregory adviſes people to delay their children's baptiſm, till they are capable to hear and anſwer ſome of the holy words." †

"Ambroſe and Chryſoſtome, though born of Chriſtian parents, were not baptized till they were adult." ‡

"St. Ambroſe, St. Jerome, and St. Auſtin, were born of Chriſtian parents, and yet not baptized till the full age of man, or more." §

* Gale's Reflections, p. 39. † Ibid. 41.
‡ Hiſt. Eng. Bapt. Vol. II. Appen. p. 68. § Ibid. Vol. I. pref. p. 51.

From theſe quotations, we ſee that Gregory, Chryſoſtome, Ambroſe, and Jerome, four of Mr. Worceſter's five worthies, whom he brought to prove the univerſality of pædobaptiſm in the fourth century, were themſelves the children of Antipædobaptiſts; their parents being Chriſtians, and one or more of them biſhops, yet did not have their children baptized: beſides, Gregory, the firſt of them, adviſed the delay of infant baptiſm, till they were capable to hear and anſwer ſome of the holy words. The public will judge what credit is to be attached to Mr. Worceſter's aſſertions.

We will now hear what he has to ſay of pædobaptiſm in the fifth century. The public will obſerve how he labours, continually, to impreſs his readers with an idea, that what he relates is much nigher the beginning of Chriſtianity than what it really is. What he ſays, with relation to infant baptiſm in the fifth century, is this:—

'Auſtin, who was *cotemporary* with *ſome of theſe laſt*, and who *flouriſhed only about two hundred and eighty years after the apoſtles*, in a controverſy with Pelagius, alleged the practice of infant baptiſm, in proof of the doctrine of original ſin. "Why are infants (ſays he) baptized for the remiſſion of ſin, if they have none? Infant baptiſm the whole church practiſes: it was not inſtituted by councils, but was ever in uſe." Pelagius, whoſe intereſt it was to ſet this argument aſide, was ſo far from denying the alleged fact, that in reply to the ſuggeſtion of ſome, that by denying original ſin he denied the right of infants to baptiſm, he utterly diſcards the idea, and affirms, that he never heard of any, not even the moſt impious heretic, who denied baptiſm to infants. This teſtimony (ſays Mr. Worceſter) is impregnable.' Why ſo? for to it we anſwer—

1. The whole of this, ſo far as it has any formidableneſs in it, may be a forgery, as many other things, of the like nature, have been proved to be.

2. To make the moſt of it, it is but the aſſertion of one man; and if this one man's ſingle aſſertion, ſhould not be more correct than ſome of Mr. Worceſter's, it might not be thought impregnable.

3. It is not only the aſſertion of but one man, but this one man does not aſſert, that there is none who denies infant baptiſm; but that he has heard of none. Now, if this Pelagius had not heard of every thing, his aſſertion might be true, and yet the whole body of Chriſt's viſible church might deny baptiſm to infants: for,

4. The visible church of Christ was, at this time, hidden in the place which God had prepared for her; and little or nothing was now seen or heard of the *true gospel church*, in what was called the Christian world; but the church of *Antichrist* was in high repute. Hence,

5. If Pelagius spake or wrote the words which Mr. Worcester supposes, and if they were the simple truth of his heart, they only prove, that Pelagius knew nothing of the hidden church of Christ. They by no means prove what Mr. Worcester wished them to, that the church of Christ held to infant baptism.

As to what Austin, or Augustine, says, "Infant baptism the whole church practises: it was not instituted by councils, but was ever in use;" we answer—

1. That he had respect to the church of Antichrist, which alone was in reputation in his day; and the whole of this church did, no doubt, then, as it does still, practise infant baptism.

2. As to Austin's saying, "Infant baptism was *ever in use*," we need only observe, if Austin thus said, he made a large mistake.

Mr. Worcester in the next paragraph is rather too bold in his assertion. His words are, 'From this period (says he) the matter is clear, beyond dispute. Dr. Gill himself, one of the most learned of the Antipædobaptist writers, acknowledges that infant baptism was the practice of the church universally, from the third to the eleventh century.' Were it not that I am grown familiar with Mr. Worcester's erroneous statements and groundless assertions, this might a little surprise me. I will give the public Dr. Gill's own words, and then each will judge for himself.

Says the Doctor, in his Brief Illustrations, &c. chap. ii. cons. 4. "Christ has no where promised, that his doctrine and ordinances should not be perverted; but, on the contrary, has given *clear* and *strong* intimations, that there should be a *general falling away*, and *departure* from the *truth* and *ordinances* of the gospel, to make way for the revelation of *Antichrist*: and though it will be allowed, that during this period infant baptism prevailed, yet it did *not universally* obtain. There were *witnesses* for *adult baptism* in *every age*: and Christ had a *church* in the *wilderness*, in obscurity, at this time, namely, in the *vallies* of *Piedmont*; who were, *from the beginning* of the *apostasy*, and witnessed against it, and bore their *testimony against infant baptism*."

It is nothing ſtrange, that a perſon engaged, as Mr. Worceſter is, in the cauſe of Antichriſt, ſhould pervert and miſrepreſent the ancients; but that a perſon of ſenſe ſhould expoſe his character and veracity, in flagrantly miſrepreſenting the moderns, as he does, is not a little to be wondered at.

After ſaying juſt what he pleaſed, not only without evidence, but contrary to evidence, he produces a *quotation* from Dr. Wall's hiſtory of infant baptiſm, as he tells us, and the quotation itſelf is equally aſide from truth, with his other quotations, and aſſertions of his own Not in one inſtance does he inform us where any of his quotations are to be found: he probably did not know, or was not fond of their being examined.

As he comes near the cloſe of this long note, to which we have given conſiderable attention, he obſerves, 'The unprejudiced reader will now judge, with how much candour and truth, an attempt has been made, in ſome late publications, to make the unlearned and unſtable believe, that the practice of infant baptiſm had its riſe in the dark ages, under the influence of popery.' I add, The unprejudiced reader will now judge, with how much *candour* and truth, an attempt has been made, by Mr. Worceſter, to make the unlearned and unſtable believe, that the *human rite* of infant baptiſm had its riſe in the days of the apoſtles, and that it was practiſed for *twelve* or *fifteen hundred years*, *no one forbidding it.* Eſpecially, ſince the ſame Mr. Worceſter tells us, that 'from Walafrid Strabo (a man, ſays Moſheim, of no mean reputation) ſome paſſages have been quoted, in which he repreſents infant baptiſm as having had its origin about the time of St. Auſtin:' which, indeed, appears to have been the time of the introduction of infant baptiſm into England.*

'As to the aſſertion (ſays Mr. Worceſter) in the Miniature Hiſtory of the Baptiſts, "That the Waldenſes, Wickliffites, and Huſſites were Baptiſts," it may ſuffice to ſay, there is ſufficient evidence that it has no foundation in truth.' Here Mr. Worceſter takes all for granted. Let Mr. Worceſter, or let any other perſon, attempt to ſhow that it is *not founded in truth*, *then* will the author of it endeavour, if life and health continue, to ſhow ſuch an attempt to be vain; and not only ſo, but that the Miniature Hiſtory is founded on the broad baſis of truth. For the

* See Hiſt. Eng. Bapt. Vol. II. pref.

present, it shall be only observed, that as Mr. Worcester and his brethren can trace their *descent* from the Papists, and their peculiarities, such as *infant baptism*, infant church membership, unbelievers' baptism, baptism upon the faith of others, &c. from the man of sin, and no farther; so the Baptists can trace their descent, and their peculiarities, such as believers' baptism, communion of saints, &c. to the Waldenses, Wickliffites, Hussites, Petrobrusians, &c. and through them to the apostles, and to the Bible, where they still find their peculiarities, and an account of their ancestors.

Thus far it appears that Mr Worcester is substantially incorrect, in every material point. Not to a *single difficulty* has he put the Baptists, unless the trouble of detecting his antiscriptural and erroneous notions of the gospel church, and the exposing of his false positions, be considered *one*.

It is hoped, that the reader's deeds are not so evil, and his heart so hard, that he will reject the light, and refuse to come to it, lest his deeds should be reproved. Eternity will reveal all errors and remove ignorance, but it will never convert and save such as hate the light.

In the mean time,

I am, the reader's and the public's, &c.

We appeal to the Bible, to stubborn facts, and to common sense.

LETTER VIII.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS,

WE would not solicit your attention to any more of Mr. Worcester's mistakes, were it not that the honour of the Christian Lawgiver, the advancement of his rising church, and your own happiness, require that you should know the truth.

Mr. Worcester in the first place took a wrong set off, and he has so exactly kept his first direction, that he has seldom come within sight of truth's highway. His notions of the church of Christ appear to be as erroneous as were the notions of the old Jewish church with respect to Christ

himself. He also appears to be as ready to mistake what is said of the gospel church, as the Jews were to mistake what Christ said of himself. Not only so, but he is, manifestly, equally ready to misrepresent the sentiment and practice of the gospel church, that he may make room for his Judaizing sentiments, and for his Jewish church in gospel times.

Page 57, he tells the public, that 'when the Antipædobaptists would prove that the Abrahamic covenant has ceased, the arguments advanced only go to show that the Mosaic law, or Sinai covenant, is abolished.'

From this statement of the matter, no one would receive a just idea of the sentiments or arguments of the Antipædobaptists. They have no disposition to prove, that the Abrahamic covenant, which included the promise, that in him and in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, has ceased. But when they would prove, that the Abrahamic covenant of circumcision has ceased, their arguments go to show, that the law of commandments contained in ordinances is abolished, and that the covenant of circumcision is one of these commandments and ordinances. Let Mr. Worcester and his brethren prove the contrary, if they be able.

Again, pages 57, 58, says he, 'When they would prove, that the infant seed of the church ought not to be baptized, the arguments adduced only go to show, that believers, who have never received baptism, ought to be baptized.'

Mr. Worcester is very forgetful, or he knows better than to misrepresent matters in this way. He knows, or ought to know, for he has had the means of knowing, that the arguments of the Antipædobaptists go to prove, that the gospel pre-requisite to baptism is such as new-born infants cannot possess, and therefore are excluded from the ordinance, by the pre-requisite enjoined in the institution. Had he have told the public, that the arguments of the Antipædobaptists go to prove, that the gospel enjoins, that persons shall be taught, or discipled, previous to baptism, and since new-born infants can be neither taught nor discipled they are not to be baptized, then would he have told us the simple truth. But the plain truth would not have served his purpose; he therefore chose to misrepresent us, or else he has very ignorantly done it.

Mr. Worcester's *fifth* inference, page 64, must now command a little attention; and it is worthy of it, both on

account of its novelty and the popiſh method which he hath adopted in its ſupport. The inference is, 'It may be inferred from our ſubject, that *ſprinkling* or *affuſion* is a valid and ſcriptural mode of baptiſm.'

Would it not have been more ſatisfactory to the public, had Mr. Worceſter have ſhown us from the word of God, that *ſprinkling* or *affuſion* is a valid and ſcriptural mode of baptiſm: but this he could not do. He has done the beſt he could: he has inferred from his ſubject that it is ſo; he has alſo endeavoured to prove it. His argument is, in ſhort, the following:—

The Pædobaptiſt church is the true goſpel church. The true goſpel church, in all ages, has, according to the purpoſe and promiſe of God, had eſſentially correct views of the ſacraments. The true church, for twelve or fifteen hundred years, univerſally, allowed baptiſm by ſprinkling or affuſion to be ſcriptural and valid. 'Hence, if baptiſm by ſprinkling or affuſion be not valid and ſcriptural, *then*, for the firſt twelve or fifteen hundred years, the views of the whole body of the Chriſtian world reſpecting baptiſm, the firſt ſacrament of the church, were eſſentially erroneous.'

Here, as his manner elſewhere is, he takes for granted the very things, and the only things, which have need to be proved, and then draws his concluſion, as though his premiſes were eſtabliſhed.

In the firſt place, he takes for granted that the Pædobaptiſt church is the true goſpel church, which the Antipædobaptiſts have always denied; and they have ever conſidered pædobaptiſm as a badge of Antichriſt, if not her eſſential characteriſtic.

His next premiſe is fully granted, and is, no doubt, ſufficiently correct; and, if true, will ſpoil his buſineſs of ſprinkling and affuſion. It is this, The true goſpel church, in all ages, has, according to the purpoſe and promiſe of God, had eſſentially correct views of the ſacraments.

We will now hear his other poſition, which is, The true church, for twelve or fifteen hundred years, univerſally, allowed baptiſm by ſprinkling or affuſion to be ſcriptural and valid.

Had not Mr. Worceſter have dealt ſo largely in univerſal affirmatives, he would not have ſo largely expoſed himſelf to ſevere reproof at every turn.

The hiſtoric truth is juſt this, The true church of Chriſt never, in any age, allowed ſprinkling or affuſion to be ſcrip-

tural and valid baptism. But Mr. Worcester is, in fact, speaking of the church of Antichrist; and had he kept historic truth on his side, even with respect to her, he would have been less censurable than he now is. He, doubtless, had the history of Antichrist before him, and might have been as correct as she is; but even the general corruptions of Antichrist were not sufficiently erroneous for him, but he must have them always to have been as great as they were when they came to their highest degree of perfectness. History informs us, that even Antichrist had not obtained that degree of presumption, as to set aside the form or matter of gospel baptism, and to change it for sprinkling or affusion, except in cases of sickness or some bodily infirmity, till the year 1305; when Pope Clement the fifth, at the second synod of Ravenna, approved, that baptism might be given, *no necessity compelling*, by sprinkling.*

Indeed, in Germany, so late as the year 1542, it was not generally known, if at all, that any, even in the church of Antichrist, practised or allowed sprinkling, save in the case of sickness or other infirmity, as the following assures us:—

"Johannes Bugenhagius Pomeranus, when he saw, at Hamburgh, an infant brought to baptism, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and water sprinkled upon its head, was amazed; for that, except in the case of necessity, for persons sick in their beds, he had neither seen, nor heard, nor in any history read, of any such thing. Whereupon there being a convocation of all the ministers, it was asked of Mr. John Fritz, who had been formerly minister at Lubeck, how baptism was there administered, who answered, "Infants were there, as in all Germany, baptized *naked*; but he was ignorant how that peculiar manner of baptizing had crept in at Hamburgh" "At length it was agreed amongst them, that they should send to know the opinion of Luther, and the divines at Wertemberg, in this matter; which being done, Luther wrote back to Hamburgh, that this *sprinkling* was an abuse, which ought to be removed; that thereupon immersion was restored at Hamburgh."†

It was not till the year 1603, that sprinkling obtained a peaceable footing in England; and even to this day, unless their rubrick has been lately changed, their priests are obliged to dip the well children in the water.‡

* Hist. Eng. Bapt. Vol. II. Appendix, p. 70. † Ibid.

‡ See Eng. Church Rubrick on Baptism.

Even when sprinkling was substituted for baptism, in case of sickness, yet it was a doubtful matter, at best, whether it were in fact Christian baptism, or would answer for it. This is evident, from what the primitive fathers in the church of Antichrist have said upon the subject. Cyprian thought it might be so considered.* But this sprinkling or pouring for baptism, was thought and judged so imperfect, that it was not thought lawful for any who were baptized in this way, to be admitted to any office in the church. See this point stated somewhat largely in Dr. Gale's Reflections, from page 207 to 212.

What could have induced Mr. Worcester to have framed such palpable mistakes, the public will judge, each one for himself. How he, in a land of freedom, where every one has liberty to speak and write the truth, could contradict the Bible, stubborn facts, and common sense, as he has done, is a problem I know not how otherwise to solve, than to consider him so blinded by prejudice and party, that he knew not what he said, nor whereof he affirmed. Indeed, he appears exceeding mad against the church of Christ, and as he proceeds in his pages his disposition to misrepresent her increases.

I pass over several unfounded assertions, that I may come the sooner to a most notorious slip of his pen, judgment, information, or conscience. He will cloak himself under which he pleases; but one thing is certain, that the following assertion of his is a notorious untruth. Says he, page 66, 'The Anabaptists, or Antipædobaptists, my brethren, are a sect of modern date.' He adds another sentence, which is no less contrary from stubborn facts than is the preceding. 'They (says he) had their origin some time after the reformation under Luther and Calvin; and their origin, certainly, though we would by no means reproach our more regular brethren of the present day with it, was but very little calculated to impress a belief that the true church of God was only to be found among them.'

The origin of the Antipædobaptists (or of the Anabaptists, as they were styled by their enemies by way of contempt, as Christians were once called Nazarenes) Mr. Worcester knows not, or he will not acknowledge; he therefore cannot inform us whether it was *honourable*, or the *reverse*. 'They had their origin (he says) some time after the reformation under Luther and Calvin.' But the fact is,

* Cyprian, Ept. Corr, ad Fabium, apud Niceph sub. 6. cap. 3.

their origin cannot be found by their enemies: for they are unwilling to find it among the diſciples of John and of Chriſt, where it really is. They can find it no where elſe. But to expoſe Mr. Worceſter's raſhneſs, relative to the origin of the Baptiſts, Anabaptiſts, or Antipædobaptiſts, I will give the public a ſhort account of it, or rather of the Pædobaptiſts' entire uncertainty or ignorance in this matter, as ſtated by Moſheim, in his celebrated hiſtory of the church of Antichriſt. His words are, "The true *origin* of *that ſect, which acquired* the denomination of the Anabaptiſts by their adminiſtering anew the rite of baptiſm to thoſe who come over to their communion, and derived that of Mennonites from the famous man to whom they owe the greateſt part of their preſent felicity, *is hid in the remote depths of antiquity*, and is of conſequence *extremely difficult to be aſcertained.* This uncertainty will not appear ſurpriſing, when it is conſidered, that this ſect ſtarted up all of a ſudden, in *ſeveral countries* at the *ſame point of time*, under leaders of different talents and different intentions, and at the *very period* when the *firſt conteſt* of the *reformers* with the Roman pontiffs drew the attention of the world, and employed the pens of the learned, in ſuch a manner as to render all other objects and incidents almoſt matters of indifference."*

Mr. Worceſter will not deny the teſtimony of his brother Moſheim; if he ſhould, a multitude of others might be produced, to eſtabliſh, in ſubſtance, the ſame fact.

After making ſeveral other aſſertions, not founded in fact, he ſays, page 67, 'Can we, then, believe that their mode of baptiſm only is ſcriptural and valid? If ſo, what becomes of the faithfulneſs of God to his promiſes?'

Reply. Did God ever promiſe to continue the goſpel ordinances to the church of Antichriſt? Or, is he unfaithful to his promiſes, if he have not continued the true goſpel baptiſm, through all generations, in the antichriſtian church of Rome? The church of Chriſt, as Mr. Worceſter ought to know, and he would recollect, were he not darkened by the traditions of men, hath been in the wilderneſs twelve hundred and ſixty years, during which time we are not to expect that the hiſtory of Antichriſt will give us much correct information reſpecting her. Nor can we depend upon their accounts being either friendly or juſt. Beſides, at the beginning of the reformation under Luther and Calvin, the church left her wilderneſs ſtation, and aroſe *as*

* Cent. 16. ſect. 3. part 2. chap. 3.

from the dead, and *appeared in many places, almost at the same point of time.* And during the reformation, God shewed to both Luther and Calvin, as you may see by their writings, what was the true gospel baptism; but neither they nor their followers would be faithful in the practice of it: but the church of Christ hath both known and observed it, and will still do thus.

The public ought to be apprized, that Mr. Worcester, from beginning to end of his Sermons, has been pleading the cause, and for the church and ordinance, of Antichrist; then will they not be greatly surprised, to hear him combine sprinkling and many other things, which he and his brethren have practised, and then say, 'The man who could believe it (that is, that these things are, taken together, all erroneous, and the sooner demolished the better) would find but very little difficulty in believing, that the Bible is a cunningly devised fable, &c.' And, says he, page 69, 'The fair and invincible conclusion then is, that sprinkling or affusion, the mode of baptism practised in these churches, is scriptural and valid.'

Mr. Worcester has taken the same course of argumentation to support the validity of sprinkling or affusion, which the mother of harlots has employed to prove all her filthy abominations to be scriptural and valid; and her conclusion is equally strong, scriptural, and valid with his. Yes, and the Bible too must be considered as a cunningly devised fable, if his antiscriptural and papistical notion of sprinkling be not granted, as being both scriptural and valid.

Now follows another of his consequences. 'Accordingly (says he) there is nothing in the scriptures against it, (sprinkling for baptism) but much, did time permit, in favour of it.' What a pity he had not taken a little time, to have mentioned at least one passage in favour of sprinkling? Till he does, he will be considered as having done the work of the Lord deceitfully.

We have already seen, that stubborn facts, recorded by historians, both ancient and modern, are to Mr. Worcester as rotten wood. He runs directly through them, and asserts just the contrary, without giving a show of reason why he does so. He has also begun to treat the Bible in the same manner. But his boldness hitherto is quite out-done, by his daring and presumptuous assertions in the two paragraphs which next follow. These two I shall transcribe entire, that they may stand as perpetual monuments of his too great boldness. Says he,

'*We have no evidence in the scriptures, that in the days of Christ and his apostles, any person was baptized by dipping, or immersion.*'

'*After all the laborious and ostentatious criticism upon the Greek word* BAPTIZO, *it still remains a fact, well known to all who are versed in the Greek language, that the use of that word determines nothing, in respect to the particular mode in which water is to be applied in baptism. It is, in a variety of instances, in the Greek scriptures, and in other Greek writings, used to signify a washing or cleansing, which was performed by sprinkling or pouring; and may as properly signify sprinkling or pouring, as plunging or dipping.*'

Upon these words of Mr. Worcester's, I shall just make the following observations.

1. Had Mr. Worcester been ignorant of the Greek, his *ignorance* might have *plead for him*, that his *fault* was but the *sin* of *presumptive ignorance*.

2. Mr. Worcester having given us no instance, from any writings, either sacred or profane, in which the word *baptizo* is used in the sense in which he tells us it is, in a variety of instances, in the Greek scriptures, and in other Greek writings, he is therefore not *entitled* to the *belief* of any person.

3. Mr. Worcester does not appear to believe himself; for in his note, on the next page, he endeavours to *parry* the charge of presumption and falsehood, which he probably expected would be made out against him, and says, '*It is important* to be remembered, that when words are used in reference to *divine institutions*, and to *spiritual things*, they have an *appropriate* meaning, which can *never* be determined from the *meaning* which they have in *common use*.' A person who would believe this papistical turn and newly vamped deception of Mr. Worcester's, deserves to be ignorant. Let the common people but believe him in this, and he can make them Papists at once.

To give his observation a show of reason, he tells us, that '*deipnon* signifies a feast or common meal, and yet we think it sufficient to take a small piece of bread and a very little wine.' But do not the evangelists Mark and Luke fully explain this matter, and tell us, that what is called the *Lord's supper* was at most but a small part of the supper which they ate at the time? Can Mr. Worcester show any exception, with respect to baptism, and make it appear that the word is used in a diminutive sense? then would his observation not be so in the face of scripture and common sense, as it now is. But even then, it would be nothing to

his purpoſe; for it would make no more than this—that a partial immerſion, or very ſmall part immerſed, would be baptiſm. Beſides, if we can know nothing of the *ordinances*, or of *divine things*, by the uſe of words in their commonly received ſenſe, then may the common people be deceived juſt *when* and *where* and ſo much as their deſigning prieſts ſhall chooſe. If Mr. Worceſter think to tread thus upon the necks of his own people, I pray the merciful Lord to deliver others from ſuch deceptions.

4. Mr. Worceſter cannot produce a paſſage, from Geneſis to Revelation, in which *baptizo* is uſed for ſprinkling. If he will do it, I agree to make conceſſions, before ſaints and ſinners, as publickly as he ſhall preſcribe. I do not ſay, I will make conceſſions, if he will aſſert that it is thus uſed, but if he will ſhow it to be thus: and till he does, he is, in my judgment, worthy to lie under the imputation of having deſignedly or arrogantly impoſed upon all the unlearned in his own ſociety, and in every other, and upon the public generally.

5. Mr. Worceſter tells us, that *baptizo*, or to baptize, 'may as properly ſignify ſprinkling or pouring, as plunging or dipping;' and yet he adds, 'It is *important* to be remembered, that when words are uſed in reference to *divine inſtitutions*, and to *ſpiritual things*, they have an *appropriate* meaning, which can never be determined from the meaning which they have in their common uſe.' Here, according to Mr. Worceſter, the word *baptizo* means any thing which either he or his opponents chooſe, and from its meaning nothing can be determined by either. This very exactly comports with what ſome of the blind leaders are bold enough to ſay, *That common people can never know for themſelves what baptiſm is, but muſt believe it to be what their miniſters tell them.*

Nor has he given the public any better argument than this, to prove that the human invention of ſprinkling is the divine inſtitution of baptiſm. His argument is this—'The Pædobaptiſt, or, more ſtrictly ſpeaking, the Pædorantiſt denomination, is the viſible church of Chriſt. The viſible church of Chriſt hath been eſſentially correct in her notions of the goſpel baptiſm, and *ſhe* hath held ſprinkling to be ſcriptural and valid baptiſm; therefore ſprinkling is the true goſpel baptiſm.' Juſt ſo his holineſs the pope argues—"The holy catholic church of Rome is the true viſible goſpel church. The true viſible goſpel church hath ever had juſt notions of the ſacrament of the *ſupper*; and *ſhe*

hath for many hundred years believed, that the bread and wine, after the consecration of the priest, are changed into the real body and blood of Christ: therefore the doctrine of transubstantiation is scriptural and valid. So are, for the same reasons, the doctrines of purgatory, extreme unction, praying to the virgin Mary and to images, counting of beads, and all the other fripperies of the church of Rome, scriptural and valid." Thus we see that Mr. Worcester's argument and the pope's are just the same, and used to establish the same point—that man's inventions are God's institutions.

Mr. Worcester denies that the pope's church is the visible church of Christ, and so the pope's argument is spoiled. We equally deny, that Mr. Worcester's unbaptized church is the visible church of Christ, his argument therefore falls to the ground equally as did the pope's.

In pages 69, 70, Mr. Worcester has a note, which deserves attention. His words are, 'It has been a common thing with the Antipædobaptists, to speak very disrespectfully of learning and learned men; but of late, one can hardly meet with an Antipædobaptist, who is not prepared to talk so fluently and so learnedly of the meaning of Greek and Latin words, as almost to amaze one. Even the author of Seven Sermons, on the mode and subjects of baptism, "desires to thank God that he knows the Greek as well as any man;" and has two or three sermons almost wholly upon the meaning of a few Greek and Latin words. On this subject, however, though from his manner one might be led to suppose it had never before been attended to, he has nothing materially new: nothing but what was furnished to his hands by Dr. Gill, and other Anabaptist writers; and nothing but what has been repeatedly and unanswerably answered. He asserts much, but proves very little; and yet, with an authoritive air, but little becoming a Christian minister, he requires us all to submit to his assertions, on pain of being placed at the *ban* of the kingdom of Christ!'

Upon this part of his note (and more of it will be produced soon) the following remarks may merit some attention.

1. If learning have been generally misused by learned men, as it has by Mr. Worcester, to misrepresent the characters and sentiments of the Antipædobaptists, it is not to be wondered at, if they have spoken disrespectfully of both.

2. As to the contemptuous manner in which he speaks of me, it is but a small thing, as it respects me personally; but as to his merit or demerit, in publishing an hearsay expression, intentionally to my disadvantage, the public will judge. Notwithstanding his *assertion* and *re-assertion*, that I have made the expression *somewhere*, and before some persons, whom Solomon would call tale-bearers, I still consider it a slander, and the accusation as false as the manner of his publishing it was illiberal. Had I have made the expression, would any man, had he a good cause to defend, have employed such kind of defence? No man, who suitably regards his own reputation, will, in a religious controversy, *seek* the *support* of his *cause* by lessening, in any uncivil method, the character of his opponent. Should I lower the character of Mr. Worcester, it shall be because I am compelled to it, by setting in plain view how he has exposed himself. I will not mention what I know of the man, nor will I utter what fame hath reported; my business with him, before the public, is upon what he hath committed to the inspection of the whole:

What advantage he could propose to himself, or to his denomination, by telling the public, that my Sermons contained nothing materially new, and that what I had said was furnished to my hand by Dr. Gill and others, is difficult to ascertain, unless it were to make me appear as small as he could, that my opponents might consider their task to be easy, and the productions of my pen to be scarce worth reading. But whether my Sermons be *great* or *small*, whether they contain things *new* or *old*, whether the subject matter of them were furnished to my hand by Dr. Gill (a page of whose writings I had then never seen upon the subject) or by any other person, is not the point. The question of importance is, Do they contain stubborn facts, so handled by common sense as to expose the Pædobaptist errors, by the exhibition of plain truth?

3. What he tells the public, of my requiring persons to believe what my Sermons contain, upon pain of being placed at the *ban* (that is, the curse, or execration) of the kingdom of Christ, is equally unfounded with his other assertions.

We will now hear some more of his note. Says he, 'The word *baptizo*, as conceded on all hands, signifies to *wash*.' Here he mistakes again. It is not, by any means, conceded, that *baptizo* signifies to *wash*, in the common

acceptation of that word. It signifies to wash in a specific sense; to wash by immersion, dipping, or putting the thing in water: this is the only sense in which we concede that *baptizo* signifies to wash. Mr. Worcester subjoins, 'If it be said, that sprinkling or affusion is not washing; it may also, with equal pertinency, be said, that dipping is not washing.' Here is another of his mistakes: for dipping is, in the Bible, in the case of Naaman, put for a specific kind of washing; in one instance it is called washing, and in another the same thing is called dipping. But, if my recollection serves me, sprinkling is never called washing; never once so called, from Genesis to Revelation: and all he says about it is, in my judgment, merely to darken counsel by words without knowledge.

Again, says he, 'If it be said, that dipping is one mode in which washing is performed; it may, in rejoinder, be said, so also is sprinkling or affusion one mode in which washing is performed; and that too, the mode in which the scriptures most commonly represent ceremonial and spiritual washings.' But where do the scriptures say any such thing? Where do they so much as once mention that sprinkling is ceremonial or spiritual washing, or any other kind of washing? Mr. Worcester's side must, indeed, be hard pressed, when, with all his labour, he cannot find so much as a sentence of scripture, to help him out of his increasing difficulty.

In the next paragraph, he very incautiously involves himself in a double difficulty, from which he will not be able to extricate himself.

'It is *important* (says he) to be remembered, that when words are used in reference to *divine institutions*, and to *spiritual things*, they have an appropriate meaning, which can never be determined from the *meaning* which they have in their *common use*.' Here two things are highly noticeable.

1. He implicitly grants, with relation to *baptizo*, what we affirm to be true, that the common use, the plain sense, of it, is to immerse; otherwise, it would not be important to his purpose for us to remember, 'that when words are used in reference to divine institutions, they have an *appropriate meaning*, which can never be determined from the *meaning* which they have in their *common use*.' For if *baptizo*, in its common use, ever mean to sprinkle or affuse, which Mr. Worcester tells us, in the preceding page, it may as properly signify, as to plunge or dip, then, if to sprinkle

or to pour be baptism, the word has no appropriate meaning *when used* in reference to that divine institution. But, says he, 'It is important to remember, that it has an appropriate meaning when used in reference to a divine institution;' therefore, in its common use it can have no such meaning as to sprinkle or pour.

2. For more than seventeen hundred years, both the learned and the unlearned have, generally, been enveloped in necessary ignorance, as to what the divine institution of baptism is; for few, if any, ever knew, till Mr. Worcester gave the *important information*, that they were not to understand *baptizo*, when used with reference to baptism, in the same sense in which it was commonly used. The Lord hath no where given us this *important* information; and had it not been for Mr. Worcester, we had still gone on in our native and necessary ignorance. What will Christians think and say of this matter? Reader, I pray thee consider wisely of this. Hath the wise, the compassionate Lord Jesus commanded all who love him to be baptized, and in the command, and in the circumstances of the command, hath given them no information, but what he intended they should observe, what the common sense of the word imported, while, at the same time, he had an appropriate secret meaning to it? Does Mr. Worcester think to change the laws of Christ, at this late period of the world? Will Christians admit such a gross imposition, not merely upon the Bible and upon common sense, but upon the Lord of both? Shall the world be always imposed upon by such bare-faced wickedness? He virtually accuses the Christian Lawgiver with duplicity and deception. The Lord hath commanded a divine institution, yet in the command hath used words in an appropriate sense, and yet hath given no intimation of their being thus used; and thus he hath imposed upon his poor followers, or else Mr. Worcester hath manifestly accused, *falsely*, the Holy One of Israel. Will Mr. Worcester blush and condemn himself, for thus abusing the Christ of God? or will he still justify himself, and say, that the Son of God, who taught man's tongue to speak, and gave understanding to the sons of men, hath, in the character of Christian Lawgiver, used words in such an appropriate sense, that both the learned and the rude, the saint and the sinner, were all of them not only equally liable to mistake him, but under a natural necessity to do so? For Jesus Christ hath not, in any part of his law or gospel, told

us what this appropriate ſenſe is, in which he would have us underſtand the word *baptizo*, or to baptize. Nor has he ſo revealed this to Mr. Worceſter, that he is able to inform us with certainty what it is; at moſt, he can, or does, tell us nothing more than this—It is a very ſmall or little immerſion.

May the long-ſuffering Redeemer kindly rebuke and graciouſly forgive the preſumption of the man, and deliver his own people from ſuch groſs impoſitions!

I will preſent the public with but one more quotation from the note under conſideration, and it is this, 'Should any zealous Chriſtians (ſays he) think it neceſſary to make literally a feaſt, or a full meal, at the Lord's table; they might, with as much propriety, and as much of the Chriſtian ſpirit, ſeparate themſelves from the communion of thoſe who only partake of a little bread and wine, and charge them with refuſing to keep the ordinance of the Lord; as thoſe, who think it neceſſary to be plunged all over in water, can ſeparate themſelves from the communion of thoſe who have only been baptized by ſprinkling, and charge them with not keeping the ordinance of the Lord.'

This is another of his miſrepreſentations: for,

1. The partaking of a little bread and wine, is the plain, literal import of the ordinance, or of the elements and celebration of it; as is manifeſt in the very inſtitution of it. It was while they were eating and drinking, or after they had for a while been eating and drinking, our Lord took bread and wine, and gave them to his diſciples, as a commemorative ordinance. But,

2. It is not thus in the ordinance of baptiſm. There is no ſuch intimation, that a very ſmall or partial immerſion is, was, or ever ſhall be, goſpel baptiſm. And as for ſprinkling, man's ſubſtitute for goſpel baptiſm, there is nothing in it which has any ſimilarity to the firſt goſpel ordinance. There is, therefore, no likeneſs in the two caſes which he has put: one is according to the commandment and pattern given, and the other is quite a different thing. God's people will one day ſee how their leaders cauſe them to err.

In the mean time, I am, for defending the truth, the reproach of many.

We appeal to the Bible, to ſtubborn facts, and to common ſenſe.

LETTER IX.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS,

YOU are, no doubt, either tired of Mr. Worceſter's miſtakes and miſrepreſentations, or of my corrections of his departures from ſcripture truth, from hiſtoric facts, and from common ſenſe. But, as he has impoſed upon your credulity, and inſulted your want of claſſic knowledge and hiſtoric information, you will readily bear with me a little, whilſt I endeavour to remove the blinds and uncover the deceptions which have kept you from ſeeing the order and ordinances of the church of the Son of God.

We ſhall, for a few minutes, attend upon Mr. Worceſter, where he is profeſſedly giving us the ſcripture account of goſpel baptiſm.

In page 70, he introduces the ſubject thus: 'In two or three inſtances we read, (ſays he) indeed, of their going down into the water, and coming up out of the water; but the original particles, rendered in theſe inſtances, *into* and *out of*, are as properly, and much more commonly, rendered ſimply *to* and *from*.' But, I reply, they are never rendered *to* and *from*, when they refer to the ordinance of baptiſm; nor could they be properly ever thus rendered. Accordingly, the tranſlators of the Bible have never, in a ſingle inſtance, adopted Mr. Worceſter's tranſlation of them, when the ordinance was in queſtion. Nor could they with propriety have ever thus rendered them; which they would have done, if it had been poſſible, conſiſtent with their ſolemn engagement to fidelity: for it was in the reign of king James, under whoſe patronage they tranſlated the Bible, that the human rite of ſprinkling obtained public countenance in England, as a common ſubſtitute for goſpel baptiſm. Theſe tranſlators could not have failed to have admitted Mr. Worceſter's tranſlation, had the connexion have juſtified ſuch a meaſure: but in no inſtance have they done thus. They knew and practiſed better, than to per-

vert the ſcriptures by ſuch a tranſlation; and Mr. Worceſter ought to know better, or ſay leſs, for God will not always ſuffer his people to be thus blindly led.

'But (ſays he) it is particularly to be remembered, that when they went down *to* the water, or *into* the water, it is not in a ſingle inſtance ſaid how they were there baptized, whether by dipping or by ſprinkling.'

Reply. Here let common ſenſe ſpeak, and ſay, if the following inſtances do not expreſs the manner how. They were all baptized of him (John) IN the river of Jordan. Jeſus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John IN Jordan. And *ſtraightway coming up out of* the water, &c. *Buried* with Chriſt *in* baptiſm. *Planted* in baptiſm. *Buried* by baptiſm. *Raiſed* with Chriſt in baptiſm. Having our *bodies waſhed* with pure water, &c.* Is it to be particularly remembered, that not in a ſingle inſtance, when they went down to the water, or into the water, 'it is not ſaid *how* they were there baptized, whether by dipping or by ſprinkling?' It ought, indeed, to be particularly known, and then remembered, that not in a ſingle inſtance, in all the Bible, is ſprinkling ſo much as mentioned or intimated to be the matter or mode of goſpel baptiſm. In every ſingle inſtance, where any direct or circumſtantial information is given of the manner how, in baptiſm, it implies immerſion, and nothing ſhort of it. Beſides, the very word itſelf, in every inſtance, tells us, in its plain, literal, and common ſenſe, as Mr. Worceſter implicitly allows, that the manner *how*, in baptiſm, was *immerſion*.

Mr. Worceſter tells us, in his note, page 71, that 'Chriſt's baptiſm was deſigned regularly to introduce him into his prieſtly office, according to the law of Moſes.' Where did Mr. Worceſter obtain this information? Not in the Bible, for that contradicts it: for, ſays the apoſtle to the Hebrews, chap. vii. Chriſt "ſhould not be called after the *order* of *Aaron*. For the *prieſthood being changed, there is made of neceſſity a change of the law.*—Our Lord ſprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moſes ſpake nothing concerning prieſthood." Beſides, ſays the apoſtle, our Lord "is made [prieſt] *not after* the *law* of a *carnal commandment*, but after the *power of an endleſs life*. For he teſtifieth, Thou art a prieſt forever, after the *order* of *Melchiſedec*." But in contradiction to the word of God, Mr. Worceſter, that he might deprive

* Matt. iii. 6. Mark i 5, 9, 10. Rom. vi 4, 5. Col. ii. 12. Heb. x. 22.

Christians of the example of their Lord in baptism, would, without a word of scripture authority, and contrary from *every commandment* in the Mosaic *law* of *priesthood*, introduce Christ into his priestly office according to the law of Moses. Moses knew nothing about this notion of Mr. Worcester's; nor would he or his brethren ever have invented it, had they not found difficulty in opposing the practice of the baptized church.

We will now hear his conclusion, as to the scripture account of sprinkling for baptism, and his evidence, as he hath summed it up, pages 72, 73. 'Is it not plain (says he) that *sprinkling* is a mode much more properly significant than dipping? In reference to the application of the blood of Christ, we never read of dipping or immersing, but constantly of *sprinkling* or *pouring*.' Not so: for, Rev. i. 5. we read of Jesus Christ, "who loved us, and *washed* us from our sins in his own *blood*." But he adds several passages of scripture, which are nothing to his purpose, for they say nothing of baptism: however, the reader shall have set before him the passages mentioned. They are these:—"Ye are come to the blood of sprinkling. And sprinkling of the blood of Christ. I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. So shall he sprinkle many nations." 'Such (says he) are the uniform representations of scripture.' What does he here intend? If his meaning be, what his readers would naturally understand, by his statement of the matter, that 'such are the uniform representations of scripture,' when the ordinance of baptism is intended or spoken of, then there is not a word of truth in what he says, but just the reverse is true; for there is not one such representation in all the Bible, when the gospel ordinance of baptism is mentioned. I will not say that Mr. Worcester meant to deceive and impose upon the public, but this I will say, Had this been his intention, his writings could not have appeared more like it.

His next step is, to reason with his people upon *propriety* and *decency*, supposed *order* and *solemnity*, the very *mother* of this *papistical abomination*, of this *sprinkling substitute* for gospel baptism. Mr. Worcester having laboured, and *laboured in vain*, to find one word of God, which mentions sprinkling for the ordinance of baptism, he would now persuade his people and the public to give their assent to it upon the score of *propriety* and *decency*, or upon account of *order* and

solemnity. What crooked paths are trodden by the blind leaders of the blind! Once was I, as to infant baptism, in this same crooked path; but, by the *grace* of God, *I am what I am*.

Mr. Worcester, in his note, page 73, tells us, 'The question properly between us is not this, whether any were baptized, in the days of Christ and his apostles, by immersion or dipping; but it is precisely this, whether immersion or dipping be the only valid mode of baptism.' He has defined the question well, and for a full answer, see my Letters to Mr. Austin. However, I will give a short answer here, and an answer too, which neither Mr. Worcester nor his brethren have been or ever will be able to refute. The answer is this,—The Bible mode of baptism is the only valid mode. The Bible mode, that which Christ commanded, and that which the apostles practised, was immersion, and immersion only, as is evident from this plain reason—Immersion is the plain, literal, and common sense of the command, and the plain, literal, and common sense of the history given of the apostles' practice is also immersion; and there is no different or opposite sense to the literal meaning of the word, or to the practice of the apostles. But, says Mr. Worcester, 'if in the most *extreme cases*, such as those of SICKNESS and *imprisonment*, baptism might be administered by sprinkling or affusion, then immersion is not essential to the ordinance.' I answer, Certainly, if there be any possible case, in which gospel baptism may be administered in any way otherwise than by immersion, then immersion is not essential to the ordinance: but this is the very thing to be proved. The Bible, by neither precept, example, nor implication, gives any liberty for any such baptism. The Bible knows nothing of sick-bed baptism, nor of imprisoned baptism, nor of baptism by sprinkling or affusion.

After Mr. Worcester had said very many things, with very little candour, and with less regard to veracity and facts, he endeavours, page 74, to load the Anabaptists, as he terms them, with reproach, and to cover them with contempt, by charging to their account several superstitious practices which took place more than *a thousand years* before he will allow them even an existence. Says he, page 66,—'The Anabaptists, my brethren, are a sect of modern date; they had their origin some time after the reformation under Luther and Calvin.' But now, page

74, to calumniate the poor Anabaptists, he charges to their reproach what he says was practised by ancient Christians. He tells us, 'When they were baptized by immersion, they were all baptized naked, they were immersed three times, they were signed with the cross, and on coming out of the water they were clothed in white robes, &c. Let it not be said (says he) that this was the manner of popish immersions; it was the manner of the earliest immersions of which we have any account.'

Now this whole matter, or the substance of it, as he has stated it, is false, from beginning to end of it.* But the singularity of it is, that he should lay these superstitious practices to the reproach of the Anabaptists, who had not (if Mr. Worcester told the truth to his brethren) any existence till more than a thousand years after the introduction of these superstitions. Besides, what renders it still more singular is, the Anabaptists, as he calls them, have never practised or approved of the errors with which he reviles them; but his own denomination have for ages, or in different ages, practised the whole of them, as I am ready to show at large, if he and his brethren wish me to. It is to be remembered, that my proposal is, to prove that the Pædobaptists are chargeable with, and have practised, all the superstitious fripperies which Mr. Worcester unrighteously and illiberally lays to the reproach of the Anabaptists. It is not enough for Mr. Worcester to reproach the gospel ordinance of baptism, by calling it plunging and dipping; and to give the baptized church an ill name, which never answered to their public sentiment, any farther than this—when any, who had not received gospel believers' baptism, wished to be of their communion, they administered it to him. Yes, it is not enough for him to do all this, and to charge to the account of the baptized church all the evils which he can see or hear of them; but in addition, he must heap upon them the superstitions of his own professed denomination, which took place hundreds of years before there was, according to his own assertions, so much as one society of Baptists, or, as he calls them, Anabaptists, in the world. A man who can knowingly, deliberately, and wilfully, be guilty of such management, to blind his own people, to keep truth out of sight, and to

* See Booth's Pædo. Vol II p 109. Mosheim, Vol. I p. 200, 388. Vol. II. cent 4. Booth, Vol. I. p. 258, 263, 265, &c.

retain the public mind in the belief of ſome of the ſuperſtitions of popery, is not deſerving of very high reputation, among the faithful, though deſpiſed, followers of the Lamb.

Mr. Worceſter's exhortation, page 74—76, to parental faithfulneſs, would be in meaſure pleaſing, were it not that it is founded in error, and brought to ſupport it. He reminds parents of their duty, 'to bear their children on their hearts at the throne of grace, praying with them and for them; faithfully to inſtruct them, as they become capable of receiving inſtruction, in the doctrines and precepts of the goſpel,' &c. All this is good; and it is greatly to be deſired, that Chriſtians, of whatever name, were more faithful in bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But even where he enforces a goſpel duty, he does it from a conſideration of his erroneous principles, and not by goſpel injunctions or motives. He tells the parents of their *baptized children*, the *children* of the *covenant*, the *children* of the *church*, the *covenant vows* of parents *believingly* to *truſt* in the *promiſe* of God *reſpecting their children*, &c. Now, we find not a word of all this in the goſpel, with relation to *baptized unbelieving children*.

In pages 78, 79, Mr. Worceſter has ſeveral things, which deſerve to be repeated in the public hearing, and to be noticed by every perſon concerned in the preſent controverſy. Says he, 'God forbid, my brethren, that in reſpect to any denomination or ſect of profeſſing Chriſtians, we ſhould ever diſplay any thing like a ſpirit of perſecution, or even uncharitableneſs.'

We do not accuſe Mr. Worceſter of calling upon the *ſecular power*, to wage direct and bloody perſecution upon any ſect or denomination of Chriſtians; but we appeal to all who are converſant with the hiſtory of perſecutions, if he have not manifeſted the very ſpirit which hath attended them? Has it not ever been the caſe, in all perſecutions, that the perſecutors have ſaid many if not all kinds of evil, *falſely*, againſt the perſecuted, and then proceeded to other more violent ſteps? Mr. Worceſter hath already ſaid many evil things, *falſely*, againſt the Antipædobaptiſts; and in the very next ſentence to the one juſt quoted, he implicitly charges them, and very unjuſtly too, with ſeveral great evils. Says he, 'So far as they diſcover an adherence to the truth, a regard for true religion, and a zeal for God according to knowledge, we will approve and love them; but wherein they *depart* from the *truth*, do *wrong* to the

cause of *religion*, and *display* the *unhallowed spirit* of *party*, we will bear, as we are enabled and have occasion, our testimony against them.'

All this might be taken in a good sense, but what he says in the two next paragraphs shows in what sense this is to be taken. In the first of the two paragraphs he insinuates, that we are not contending or concerned for the cause of truth, but only for the cause of a party. But in the next paragraph, he accuses us roundly, and most explicitly, though *falsely*, of some of the worst of heresies. 'Merely (says he) a denial of the external rite of baptism to the infant seed of believers, though in itself exceedingly reprehensible, as it is a denial of an important *divine institution*, is, however, but a small part of the error of our Antipædobaptist brethren. *They deny God's everlasting covenant of superabounding grace, the grand charter of the inheritance and privileges of his people, and the source of blessings to all the kindreds of the earth. They deny the church of God, which was formed in the family of Abraham, and which ------ is destined to rise ------ and become ------ the joy of the universe. The grand provision, which, in his infinite wisdom and grace, Jehovah has been pleased to make, for the preservation of a righteous seed on the earth, and for the maintenance and promotion, from age to age, of his cause and kingdom in this hostile world, they not only deny, but openly contemn. They deny and contemn the grace, which* is so *kindly* and so *condescendingly* offered, for the *spiritual renovation* and *everlasting salvation* of the SEED of the *church*. The *great body* of *God's visible professing people*, even the most *enlightened* and the *most faithful*, for *hundreds* of *years*, they utterly set aside, as constituting no part of the true church of Christ, but only a part of Antichrist.—The *strong bond* of *connexion* between the *Old* and *New Testament scriptures*, they, in a manner, *destroy*. The beautiful plan of *divine wisdom* and *grace*, exhibited in the *covenant*, they *exceedingly mar*; and the *mystical body* of *Christ*, declared in his word to be one, *they rend* in *twain!*'

These accusations, and misstated and *false charges*, we consider to comprise as *notorious* a *libel* against the baptized church of Christ, as was ever made out by a Spanish inquisition, against the *same kind* of *reputed* or *pretended heretics*. Here we are accused of *denying* a *divine institution*, of denying God's everlasting *covenant of grace*, and the *church of God*. We are accused of *not only denying*, but of *openly contemning*, the *grand provision* which *Jehovah* hath made, for

the preserving a *righteous seed* on the earth; and of denying and contemning the *grace* which, as Mr. Worcester says, is offered for the *spiritual renovation* and *everlasting salvation* of the *seed of the church*. We are accused of utterly setting aside God's *visible people*, even the most *enlightened* and the *most faithful of them*, as being in the church of Antichrist; and not only so, but we do, in a manner, (unless Mr. Worcester speak falsely) destroy the connexion between the Old and New Testament scriptures, exceedingly mar the beautiful *plan* of *divine wisdom* and *grace*, and *rend in twain* the *mystical body of Christ*. This is the sum, though not all, of the *charge* which Mr. Worcester, of Salem, hath seen fit to lay at the door of the baptized church. Quite similar is it to that which the self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees brought against our baptized Head and Lord; and of the same kind, yet worse, than the charge which they brought against Paul, when they judged him to be worthy of death, for opposing the very errors which Mr. Worcester is labouring to uphold, and for vindicating those new-covenant principles and privileges which I have endeavoured to establish. But it happens to us, as it happened to our Lord, and as it hath ever happened to his faithful followers, they are unable to prove the things whereof they accuse us.

Their accusations are equally false, and appear equally malignant, with those, with which our baptized brethren have been wickedly charged from John the Baptist's day to ours. But, says Mr. Worcester, 'God forbid, my brethren, that we should ever display any thing like a persecuting spirit.' But let the reader, for a moment, ask what is a persecuting spirit? Can any thing be more like it, than are *false* and *inflammatory accusations* brought against any man, or set of men, in order to stir up the multitude against the accused? especially when the accused is charged with speaking against *God*, against his *grace*, *divine institution*, *sacred word*, and against his *visible people*? Yea, against the best of them, against the most *enlightened* and the *most faithful* of them? and when the accused are charged with *marring* the *plan* of *divine wisdom*, of *rending* in *twain* the *church* of *Christ*, and of holding to such error and such wrong, as must be *exceedingly injurious* to the *cause* of *religion* and *deeply wounding* to Christ and the members of his body! Is not the very next step, to proscribe these heretics, and would there be any thing to hinder their receiving from their *false* and *selfish accusers* such punishment, as would deter, for the

future ; provided thoſe old perſecuting laws could be revived, which once impriſoned, beat and baniſhed from Boſton, *Salem*, and from the limits of this now free State, the *ever deſpiſed, falſely* accuſed, and perſecuted followers of the Lamb of God ?

The ſum of what I propoſed to ſay upon Mr. Worceſter's Sermons is now ſaid. What remains will be included under the following particulars, as deductions from the ſubject.

1. One very natural concluſion is, that Mr. Worceſter's Sermons are little elſe but one continued ſophiſm, or falſe argumentation.

We appeal to the reader, to the public, to judge if he have produced one text from the Bible, one ſupported fact from hiſtory, or one fair argument, which common ſenſe ſhall ſay touches his main object, or ſo much as makes it probable, *that the goſpel church is but the Jewiſh church continued ?*

We appear to the reader, to the public, to judge if he have produced one text from the Bible, one ſupported fact from hiſtory, one full and fair argument, which common ſenſe ſhall ſay gives ſolidity, or the ſtamp of truth, to one of his ſecondary ſubjects, ſuch as *infant baptiſm, infant church-membership, ſprinkling* or *pouring* for *baptiſm, &c.*

The queſtion, referred to the reader, and to the public, for judgment, is not this, whether Mr. Worceſter hath *aſſerted* theſe things, or whether he attempted to prove them ; but the queſtion is, Hath he produced ſo much as one text of ſcripture, which commands theſe things, or which informs us, that either of theſe things was ever practiſed upon by Chriſt, or by his diſciples ; or hath he produced one ſupported fact from hiſtory, which informs us that the church of Chriſt ever believed or practiſed theſe things ? or that any church did, till not far from the year 250, when the baptized church began to occupy her wilderneſs ſtation ? At which time ſhe left the unbaptized, or the erroneouſly baptized, church of Antichriſt to practiſe at her pleaſure ? Or has he produced one fair and full argument, which proves in the judgment of common ſenſe, that theſe things were ever appointed by Chriſt, or practiſed by his goſpel church ? Let the Bible, let ſtubborn facts, let common ſenſe ſpeak, and be heard too ; but let not the public be deceived, nor the truth of God run down, nor the church of Chriſt ſet at nought, by the ſophiſtry of any man.

2. Another natural inference is, That Mr. Worceſter hath, in ſo many inſtances, publiſhed untruths, and thus, ignorantly or deſignedly, impoſed upon the credulity of the public, that he will have no occaſion to take it unkindly, ſhould they refuſe, in future, to take his ſingle evidence in any matter of high concernment.

The beſt apology which can be made for him, is, he undertook to write upon a ſubject, the merits of which he little underſtood; and to aſſert things without examining, and before he had time to diſcover, whether they had an agreement or diſagreement with truth.

3. One of the following things appears evident from the preceding Letters. Either firſt, that the author of them hath not met Mr. Worceſter's arguments, reaſonings, and aſſertions fairly, or ſecondly, that Mr. Worceſter's Sermons are one continued ſeries of *falſe aſſertions*, and *falſe argumentations*. The public are requeſted to deliberate candidly and judge righteouſly between the two.

Should Mr. Worceſter ſee fit to make any defence for himſelf, then every friend to truth is earneſtly deſired to examine wiſely, that he may not be deceived by a like courſe of erroneous aſſertions, and deluſory arguments. For it will remain forever true, that two ſides of a contradiction can never be ſupported by ſolid reaſonings founded in facts.

4. Should the author be charged with repetitions, his apology is what the reader has probably noticed, he had to reply to one great error, turned into a variety of ſhapes.

It is but ſmall buſineſs for an author to fill his pages with the incapacity and repetitions of his opponent. For children and fools may ſpeak the truth; and if the repetitions be many, a ſolid anſwer to one will do the buſineſs for the whole.

5. It is very eaſy to account for the wide difference between Mr. Worceſter and the author of theſe pages. They are defending the out-works of two different churches. One, the church of Antichriſt; the other, the church of Chriſt.

The reader will obſerve, I do not ſay, Mr. Worceſter is not a Chriſtian; but this is what I ſay, he is within the limits of Antichriſt's church, and is labouring hard to defend her principles and practices; and if he be one of God's people, the command to him is, "Come out of her." For

the present he is a partaker of her sins, and he may receive of her plagues.

6. Another inference is, that the author of these pages is highly censurable for rebuking Mr. Worcester so sharply before all men, unless Mr. Worcester have sinned openly. Yes, reader, if Mr. Worcester have not aimed his shafts against the church of the Lord Jesus, and been pleading for the abominations of the mother of harlots, I am not only ignorant of the subject, on which I write, but I have rebuked him in some instances with too much severity. Yet, he would be worthy of rebuke for contradicting scripture, stubborn facts and common sense, even were he, on the whole, defending the truth. But I appeal to the reader, if it be not just to rebuke him, as I have done, or, if he be not worthy of all this rebuke, and if he be not in danger of receiving more, provided the accusations, which I have laid to his charge, be abundantly supported, and he be guilty of the whole and more.

Conclusion. What I have written upon the subjects, which occupy the preceding pages, is not the production of inattention. I have deliberated seriously on what I have done.

It is, reader, no small thing, with me, to forego all that esteem and friendship, which I once possessed in the bosom of many, whom I now esteem to be the people of God, though in a great error, within the limits of Antichrist, and, for the present, disobedient to the heavenly direction to *come out of her*. To be despised, to be set at nought, and to have all manner of evil said against me falsely, is, in itself, no small trial; but seeing these things have hitherto been the lot of those who have been God's honoured instruments to spread and vindicate his messages of grace, at times, I rejoice and am exceeding glad.

If I mistake not, it is my constitutional habit to be mild and affable, where and when I may; and hard and censorious only where and when I must. When I first saw, that I must join and advocate the cause of the baptized church, my mind was filled, in measure, with the scorn, reproach, and reviling, which would fall to my share from the enemies of Jesus, and from his misguided friends. But my mind was not dismayed at the sight; nor is it at all dismayed at the reception of those evils, which the Captain of Salvation hath taught me to expect. I am, indeed, neither ashamed of the gospel, nor of its reproach.

Let the reader remember, if he would ſhare in the bleſſings of the goſpel, he muſt willingly partake of its reproach alſo. The world hated Chriſt before it hated Chriſtians; and if they have called the maſter of the houſe Beelzebub, how much more them of his houſehold?

I have now ſaid to the public what I purpoſed at this time. My deſire and prayer to God are, that truth may gain ground, and be acceptable to the public; and that error may be made aſhamed, and hide its hurtful and guilty head.

I have not come to the public with excellency of ſpeech, or of man's wiſdom, but with the ſimple attire of Truth, that the unlearned might read and underſtand. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.

In the mean time, I am, and hope ſtill to be, ſincerely the public's, in defence of the glorious goſpel of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt,

DANIEL MERRILL.

SEDGWICK, OCTOBER 27, 1806.

E N D.

☞ *In ſeveral parts of the foregoing Letters, the intelligent reader will obſerve a remarkable coincidence between the arguments contained in theſe ſheets, and thoſe which are uſed in Dr.* BALDWIN'S *Reply to Mr.* WORCESTER, *lately publiſhed. The public are aſſured, that neither Dr.* BALDWIN *nor Mr.* MERRILL *ſaw each other's arguments till they appeared in print.*

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CONTAINING,

PART I.

SECTION I.—Remarks on the unfriendly aspersions cast upon the Baptists, for refusing communion with other denominations—The gospel doctrine of a church and qualification of the members—With strictures on baptism.

SECTION II.—The impropriety of the Baptist churches communicating with those of other denominations considered, and their difference in sentiment more particularly pointed out.

SECTION III.—The arguments for free communion considered—others offered in vindication of the close communionists.

PART II.

SECTION I.—Preliminary observations on the subject in dispute.

SECTION II.—Professed believers the only appointed subjects of baptism.

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SECTION VIII.—The principles of open communion examined. The ſubject concluded.

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